

# Concordia Theological Monthly

---

Vol. XII

MARCH, 1941

No. 3

---

## The Altenburg Debate

In an evaluation of Professor Polack's book *The Story of C. F. W. Walther*, which appeared a few years ago, the review editor of the *Theologische Quartalschrift* includes the following remarks: "Important and soul-racking though the later controversies were, they dwindle when compared with the difficulties of Walther and the Saxon immigrants as they came to a head in Altenburg. In Altenburg life and death, faith and despair, hung in the balance. In the later affairs it was Walther firmly grounded in the truth and unshaken in his faith who waged the battles, although he did not succeed in convincing his opponents. He indeed ever fought the error heart and soul, yet his own faith was not stirred up to the deepest depths as was the case in Altenburg. And in spite of the smaller proportions externally when compared with the later controversies, the Altenburg Debate was of most far-reaching consequences. One shudders to think what course Lutheran church history in America might have taken if Walther had not carried the day in Altenburg." (Vol. 32:303.)

That this estimate of the Altenburg Debate is correct, that, as another historian puts it, the outcome of the debate "saved the entire movement from disorganization," will be evident to every unbiased student of history who scans the pages of the diaries and other accounts which present a picture of those momentous days. While we encounter a few difficulties in harmonizing the records of Winter, Fischer, Vehse, Schieferdecker, Koesterling, and Walther, it is by no means impossible to present a comprehensive and historically correct account of the events which led up to the Altenburg Debate and of its consequences with regard to the entire history of Lutheranism in the Middle West and even in all America.

Much has been said and written in the last few years about the *physical hardships* endured by the Saxon immigrants during the summer of 1839 and even during 1840. The descriptions given

by G. Guenther, Frederick Ferdinand Winter, the Loebers (Christianiana and Gotthold Heinrich), and Mrs. C. F. W. Walther (at that time still Emilie Buenger), agree substantially with that offered by Schieferdecker, from whose book we quote: "Relatively much severer trials [namely, than those endured by the Saxons in St. Louis] struck the congregation in Perry County. Nothing was in order here, for so many people practically had no shelter; only in haste large common sheds or camps were erected, whose possession the families shared as well as this could be done and in which many were obliged to spend even the next winter. Land had been bought, but no one knew what was his property. At first there was a communal management (*Kommunwirtschaft*); but this had to be discontinued because the credit treasury (*Kreditkasse*) had been exhausted. Not only the poorer but also the wealthier ones faced need in view of the approaching winter. The fevers peculiar to the climate soon made their appearance and caused terrible ravages, a fact which was intensified by the lack of sufficient shelter, conveniences, and other necessities of human life as well as by the hardships and labors under a burning sun, the danger of which was not yet appreciated. The new population was soon decimated, death claiming the strongest people; others lay sick with the fever for weeks and months, lacking the most necessary care, because those who would gladly have done the nursing were themselves ill. The present writer remembers that in a rude frame-house on the bank of the Mississippi not only the lower story but the upper story as well was filled with sick people, who, in addition to the heat of the fever, languished with the oppressively hot atmosphere; he remembers that in the following autumn, in one part of the colony, called Seelitz, there was not one of the buildings which had been erected in haste out of logs and in part had to house several families that was not filled with several sick persons suffering with severe cases of fever. The buildings were literally hospitals, and often there was hardly any one in a position to dispense the most necessary care to the sick ones." (P. 15 f.)

But the *spiritual tribulations* which came upon the colony, chiefly in consequence of the false teaching of Stephan, were even more severe and dangerous. The tenets held by him and defended, in part, with great vehemence and bitterness, were laid down in a manuscript bearing the title "Principles of an Ecclesiastical Constitution as It is Prescribed in the Word of God and the Symbolical Writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and as It Actually Existed in the Apostolic Church in the First Centuries." The following points are of interest in this connection: "1. The ministry, unlike any other office, is immediately instituted by God,

transmitted by our Lord Jesus Christ to the apostles and by these continued (*fortgepflanzt*) in the manner commanded in the Word of God, *i. e.*, through ordination, until our time. 2. Men cannot transmit this office; God alone can do it, and He does it through the instrumentality of the servants of His Word, who have this office in the manner referred to. . . . 4. Only through the office the grace of God is offered, through the means of grace of preaching, of the Sacraments, and of the cure of souls, through admonitions and threats, and the shepherding of the flock of Christ, and the keys for binding and loosing. 5. The office continues even if no one accepts the preaching of the Word. Those who accept preaching form the flock of Christ and, together with the office, the Church. 6. This office alone has to watch for the maintenance of the pure doctrine, for the best interests of the Church. Questions, and specifically questions concerning heresies, which have reference to considerations of doctrine, are therefore to be decided only by the servants of the Word. 7. In the same way all decisions concerning the liturgy are to emanate only from the office. However, without the consent of the lay congregation no changes may be made in a liturgy as once introduced. 8. In synodical meetings only servants of the Word have full membership (*Sitz und Stimme*). Laymen are indeed also added, but only as witnesses and listeners (*Konzipienten*). . . . 15. Every layman has the liberty to instruct and to edify himself through the reading of pertinent literature, and no one may hinder him by the application of external force; but he must not forget that he is herein to be guided by the advice of his pastor." (Koesterling, p. 37 f.)

Naturally the reaction to these unscriptural sentiments was bound to find its expression. Some of the leading laymen of the colony were particularly vehement in their opposition, namely, Marbach, Vehse, and Jaekel (or: Jaekel). But there were others whose misgivings were almost as serious, men like Sproede, Barthel, the former candidate for the ministry Kluegel, and even Pastor Buerger of the village Seelitz, who even resigned his charge after having issued a treatise in which he expressed his scruples with reference to the entire matter. Treatises were, as a matter of fact, written on both sides of the controversy, one by Loeber, in which he attempted to analyze the whole move of Stephanism with a view of renouncing it, others, in a spirit of pronounced bitterness, by the "Berliner" Sproede and by Magister Wege. The most scholarly and comprehensive discussion from the party opposing the pastors came from the pen of Vehse, whose treatise *Public Protestation*, etc., was later included in his book *Die Stephanische Auswanderung nach Amerika*. His book presented the following points: "Chapter I: Testimonies Concerning the Privileges of

Congregations over against the Clergy in Matters of Religion and of the Church. 1. Scope of these rights. First privilege: Appointment, calling, installing, and removing of preachers. 2. Second privilege: Superintending, judging, and reproving preachers. 3. Third privilege: Superintending, judging, and reproving the members of the congregation. 4. Fourth privilege: Watching over, and judging, the doctrine. 5. Fifth privilege: The supreme decision in matters of religion and the Church. 6. Sixth privilege: The supreme decision in all private controversies which come before the congregation. 7. Seventh privilege: The authority to appear in the councils with the same right as the ministers. 8. Eighth privilege: Application of the Office of the Keys in controversial and important cases, especially where excommunication is concerned. 9. Ninth privilege: The power to regulate adiaphora [matters indifferent], that is, to arrange the entire liturgy and the ceremonies and to establish the ordinances of the Church. 10. Tenth privilege: Preferment in honor before the ministers. 11. The Papacy came into being because these privileges [rights] were not acknowledged. 12. In the Protestant churches these privileges have likewise been disregarded. 13. The complaints of Protestant ministers that their station did not enjoy enough honor and preference are unjustified. 14. The rights of the congregations have been given to them by God; hence they are sacred and inviolable, and the congregations are not to be persuaded to give them up and to delegate them to the ministers. 15. The maintenance of the ancient spiritual priesthood is to be insisted upon as the main bulwark against the reestablishment of papal authority.— Chapter II. Testimonies against the False System of Stephan, according to which the Congregations are Disregarded and Oppressed. 1. Testimonies concerning the Church. 2. Testimonies concerning the government of the Church. 3. Testimonies against the *ecclesia repraesentativa* [the Church as represented by the ministers]. 4. Testimonies against the episcopal polity, especially against the establishment of a hierarchy. 5. Testimonies concerning the office of the ministry. 6. Testimonies concerning the pastoral care; its exercise and its boundaries.— Chapter III. Testimonies of Luther and Our Private Opinion Concerning the Legality of the Emigration." This last chapter culminated in the statement: "According to our opinion, which indeed we do not force upon any one, the Stephanite emigration is not the work of God but rather the work of the devil, a work of falsehood and deception." The body of this Protestation is dated at St. Louis, Mo., September 19, 1839, with an addendum dated November 14, 1839. It is signed by Dr. Carl Eduard Vehse, Heinrich Ferdinand Fischer, and Gustav Jaekel.



It is evident that Vehse in this document placed his finger on various sore spots and pointed out some errors of which all the pastors who had followed Stephan were guilty. This fact was openly acknowledged by Pastors Loeber, Keyl, Buerger, and the two Walthers in a declaration drawn up at Wittenberg, Perry County, and dated November 20, 1839. In their great humility the pastors did not at that time point out the obvious mistakes which had crept into the arguments of Vehse and his companions, but acknowledged their own shortcomings in the most unequivocal manner in the following statements: "To us, the Evangelical Lutheran pastors, a document of protest (*Protestationsschrift*) has been sent by Doctor Vehse, Mr. H. F. Fischer, and Mr. Jaekel, dated September 19 and November 9 of the current year, wherein we are charged with attempting to force the 'false papistical and sectarian hierarchical system of Stephan' upon our congregations and still continue to adhere to it.

"In answer to this we are obliged once more, as we have long ago publicly and privately stated, with deep shame of heart, to make the confession that we unconsciously permitted ourselves to be used as tools to assist in carrying out the hierarchical designs of Stephan, as whereby indeed the congregation was hindered in reaching the free exercise of many important privileges which pertain to it.

"However, as it has, from the first moment when the mystery of iniquity in Stephan by God's gracious guidance was made manifest to us, been our serious endeavor correctly to understand the net of lies which was woven about us and to set ourselves and our congregations free from it, so we can confidently testify before the omniscient God and His congregation that we now all the more despise and execrate that and every other kind of impious priestly lordship and tyranny of souls, since we have received more and more light concerning it.

"We hereby, then, in no way conceal the sins which we formerly committed, of which we had in every way made ourselves guilty, and we pray God that He would not pass judgment upon us; those, however, who—and that with a bitterness which is only too evident—wish to burden us with the accusation that we even at present are partakers of those sins may see to it whether they are in a position to justify the condemnation which they have pronounced upon us.

"But whatsoever of false leaven we also in the future may really find in ourselves, may God help us to purge it faithfully at all times, even if our attention should first have to be drawn to it by others.

"As for the rest, we declare that we have unanimously aban-

done an episcopal form of church polity, as planned, although in accordance with the Word of God and the example of the ancient Church, yet for the sake of peace and in order to obviate, as much as in us lies, all mistrust.

"We shall in every way diligently assist our congregations both to reach the right consciousness and to lead them to the proper exercise of their privileges, and to this end we bespeak for ourselves and for all our hearers grace and wisdom, love and faithfulness, power and blessing, from the good hand of God and of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. Wittenberg, Perry County, November 20, 1839." (Vehse, 151 ff.)

That this deep humiliation on the part of the pastors was not a mere gesture appears from a letter written by Pastor C. F. W. Walther on May 4, 1840, to his elder brother Otto Hermann, who was pastor of the "Saxon" congregation in St. Louis. In it we find the following statements: "The chief questions with which we are now concerned are these: Are our congregations Christian-Lutheran congregations, or are they heretical bands, sects? Have they power to call and to excommunicate? Are we pastors, or are we not? Are our calls valid? Do we still belong over in Germany, especially Pastor Loeber, who did not even get a governmental dismissal from office? Is it possible for us to have a divine call since we left our divine call in Germany and ran off according to our erring conscience? Ought not our congregations now to depose us, since it is only now that they with us appreciate the great offense which we have given? Would it not be better if the congregations would at least dismiss us and then for a while endeavor to maintain themselves by the exercise of their spiritual priesthood, whereupon they might choose either the old pastors or new ones for themselves? It is impossible for me to give you all the various answers to all these questions as they have been given. Mr. Marbach has the strongest doubts that our congregations are Christian-Lutheran congregations, that they may rightfully call and excommunicate, and that we are *pastors*; Mr. Sp. [Sproede] *denies* it most emphatically. Both advise a temporary dissolving of all ecclesiastical and congregational organization (*alles kirchlichen Gemeindeverbandes*), hence no longer visit the public service and confine themselves to worship in the home. In substantial agreement with their thinking is the former Candidate Kluegel and Tax Commissioner (*Steuerrevisor*) Barthel. Similar scruples have assailed Brohm, but more in his innermost soul; he attends public services and does not separate himself. Incidentally all candidates are advancing more rapidly in the recognition of the defects. . . . Since I shall very likely move to the new settlement of the Berlin congregation this week yet,

and since this place is located at some distance from the Dresden congregation, in addition to being separated from it by Apple Creek, which is frequently not passable, I have left it to the discretion of the Dresden congregation whether they would not themselves consider it proper and wholesome to dismiss me and either call their own pastor or to be added to the Altenburg parish. The conclusion has already been reached that it would hardly be feasible to keep me as the assistant preacher (*Filialprediger*) of Dresdenau. For that reason I intend, within the next weeks, to deliver my farewell sermon here. Who is to take my place is still uncertain. There seems to be some inclination to have a candidate ordained; but these could hardly be persuaded to accept a call at this time, since they are in doubt whether it is God's will that the congregation continue because they were clearly not established according to the will of God in the beginning. Here I hit upon points where I differ to some extent from the candidates or am still in uncertainty; orally I hope to explain more. This much I see clearly: Those who emigrated against the will of God and still have duties to perform in Germany are obliged, if this is possible, to return or to be relieved from their duties in a proper way before they may remain here under the blessing and good will of God; but this can obviously be said of only the smallest minority. . . . He [Marbach] discovers in our former sermons—the present sermons he no longer hears—more and more infirmities and awkward division and mutilation of Law and Gospel; in many points I am constrained to accept his verdict. (Still I cannot admit that I have preached actually false doctrine nor a false Christ, of which Sp. wants to accuse me; how many false applications and judgments have occurred God may judge.)” (M. Guenther, p. 36 ff.)

That these tribulations continued during the greater part of the year 1840 is evident from a letter which the older Pastor Walther addressed to his brother in Perry County on November 9, 1840, from which we quote: “You are still very weak, but you are not only spiritually weak but thoroughly miserable, without true comfort, peace, and joy. Alas, my dear brother! On the way which you are following you will not escape, but you will fall ever deeper and must sink down to hell. Why do you constantly torture yourself with your sins? Why do you lament over your unfitness for the office of the ministry, over your being destitute of all weapons of spiritual warfare? Why do you permit the memory of the offense—which indeed was given—to press you down to the ground? Why do you permit yourself to be intimidated, so that your last remnant of courage is taken? Because you do not turn to Christ, because you do not dare things with

Him alone, throwing everything else away, and yield yourself entirely to Him, accepting Him alone as your *Wisdom*, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. *One thing is needful!* This is intended also for you. You are lacking only in that one thing wherein everything is given. . . . May God bless this medicine for your strengthening! For this and for every kind of spiritual blessing, light, life, strength, courage, and victory are rising to our merciful High Priest the prayers of your brother, who dearly loves you in Him and bears you in his heart, Hermann Walther." (*Ibid.*, 42 f.)

In the mean time Vehse, at the beginning of July, 1839, had left the colony in Perry County. He remained in St. Louis for a number of months, for his first protest is dated in that city, August 5, 1839, the expanded protest November 14, 1839, and the addendum November 23, 1839. He left St. Louis on December 16, 1839, and took passage on the *Johann Georg* for Germany. On the way over he embodied all these documents in the manuscript of his book *Die Stephan'sche Auswanderung nach Amerika*, the introduction of which, as he himself writes, was finished on board ship in the North Sea, in the neighborhood of Helgoland, on February 21, 1840. But he left behind him a very able successor, the lawyer Marbach, whose attitude towards Walther, as we have seen, was sharply antagonistic. During all these months and into the year 1841 the waves of the discussion surged to and fro, with many pangs of conscience and deep heartaches on the part of all those who were honestly trying to find a way out of the difficulties. The men on the side of Marbach were Magister Wege, Mr. Sproede, Candidate Kluegel, and Pastor Buerger; the men on the defensive were Pastors Loeber, Gruber, Keyl, the younger Walther, and several of the candidates.

It was providential that the younger Pastor Walther, during the spring of 1841, was confined to the home of Pastor Keyl with a stubborn illness, which, however, did not altogether confine him to his bed. The enforced idleness gave him the finest opportunity to study the works of Luther and other sound Lutheran theologians which were in the library of the Wittenberg parsonage. More and more he came to the knowledge of the truth with regard to the doctrine of the Church and the ministry, and the conferences which he attended and which apparently did not yield too satisfactory results caused his judgment to be sharpened until the various sections of the controversy were set before his eyes with the greatest clearness.

Walther finally drew up a manuscript in preparation for a public disputation, from which the following statements will be of interest: "God removed a great destroyer from our midst, to

whom we, against the will of God, had entrusted ourselves as to a guide from heaven. But what would have become of us if God had not had further compassion on us? The poor were still oppressed, and the needy were still sighing, and the fault—it lay with us, it lay in our continuing *blindness*. But God had still not grown weary in having mercy upon us; He awakened men among us who gave public testimony of what they recognized as a remaining corruption. With cordial gratitude I must here remind of that document which, now almost a year and a half ago, Doctor Vehse, Mr. Fischer, and Mr. Jaeckel addressed to us. It was this document in particular which gave us a powerful impulse to recognize the remaining corruption more and more and to endeavor to remove it. Without this document—I now confess it with a living conviction—we might yet have pursued our way of error, from which we have now made our escape, for a long time. I confess this with an even deeper sense of shame, the more ungrateful I showed myself at first over against this precious gift of God. But although many with me handled with great unfaithfulness the light which was granted us, yet God did not cease to cause ever more beams of His truth to fall into our darkness, to tear us away from many a point which we, in our perverseness, sought to hold, to uncover to us great and perilous spiritual injuries, and to lead our hearts more and more in the way of truth. . . .

“But as vividly as I now understand what a great debt of gratitude we owe to God for awaking an ever greater number among us to recognize more deeply the injury which we have received and testify to this effect for the benefit of all, just so much I have become concerned and disquieted because voices are now heard among us whose influence, according to my conviction, may become very dangerous for us. I have chiefly two things in mind that give me cause for not a little apprehension.

“In the first place I find that some of us, in exposing and reproving the sins committed by certain ones, do not make a proper distinction and thereby cause many consciences to be burdened beyond endurance. Do not some now seek to obliterate the distinction between the seducers and those who were led astray? Is a confession of guilt not often demanded of those who were led astray, whereas the guilt rested only on the seducers? Are not some men burdening the consciences of simple souls concerning errors which only the confidential secretaries of Stephan knew? Is not frequently the horrible picture of the most infamous Stephanistic, or rather the Stephanist, Clubs, painted, whereupon the cry is raised: That is the *church* which you comprise? Are not those who yielded to the pressure of those



who did violence to their conscience and therefore accepted many a false point treated as if they were equally guilty with those who first tyrannized them and then foisted the error upon them with force, thereby burdening their consciences? . . .

"The second point that causes serious fears in me is the fact that a goodly number among us now present it either as a consideration or as an established fact that there is in our midst neither the Christian Church nor a congregation nor the ministerial office nor a valid Sacrament nor divine absolution nor the call nor the spiritual priesthood, etc. It is not only presented as a controverted point that there is a *Lutheran* congregation in our midst, but that there is at all a *Christian* congregation and that the treasures of the Church are here administered." (Koes-tering, 42 ff.)

After this clear presentation of the points in controversy Walther proceeded to show from Scripture, from the Lutheran Confessions, and from the testimony of some of the greatest Lutheran theologians just what the correct position of Lutheran Christians should be with regard to the doctrine of the Church, the authority of the Church, the ministerial office, the call, Christian fellowship, the power of the Word and of the divine ordinances. Walther's paper represented the climax, the culmination, of all the discussions, marked by accusations, recriminations, and apologies, which had been occasioned by the defection of the original leader of the group.

For an agreement was finally reached between the contending parties according to which both sides were to present their arguments in the form of a public debate. Marbach and Pastor Buerger represented the one side, while Pastor C. F. W. Walther, together with Pastors Keyl and Loeber, undertook to defend the position which they felt to be correct on the basis of the Bible. The memorable debate took place on April 15 and 20, 1841, in the presence of a large audience, all the members of which were deeply interested in the decision of the questions involved. By the grace of God, as Schieferdecker says in his short description of the event, the victory remained with those who had maintained the presence of the Church even under such adverse circumstances. It was Pastor C. F. W. Walther, in particular, who proved with convincing clearness, especially from the writings of Luther and Johann Gerhard, that the Church might outwardly be badly corrupted and still remain a Church, so long as the essential marks, the Word and the Sacraments, were still present; that even the congregation at Corinth and those of Galatia, although polluted with many sins and offenses, were still called churches of God, namely, on account of the believing Christians who were

still present; that the latter indeed were in reality not only the true Church, but that according to the common figure of metonymy the whole could receive its name from the chief or essential part, so that the name of "church" could be given to the entire congregation. (Schieferdecker, p. 20.)

The text of the Altenburg Theses, which Walther made the basis of his remarks, reads as follows: 1. "The true Church, in the most perfect sense, is the totality (*Gesamtheit*) of all true believers, who from the beginning to the end of the world, from among all peoples and tongues, have been called and sanctified by the Holy Ghost through the Word. And since God alone knows these true believers (2 Tim. 2:19), the Church is also called invisible. No one belongs to this true Church who is not spiritually united with Christ, for it is the spiritual body of Jesus Christ. 2. The name of the true Church belongs also to all those visible societies in whose midst the Word of God is purely taught and the holy Sacraments are administered according to the institution of Christ. True, in this Church there are also godless men, hypocrites, and heretics, but they are not true members of the Church, nor do they constitute the Church. 3. The name 'Church,' and in a certain sense the name 'true Church,' also belongs to such visible societies as are united in the confession of a falsified faith and therefore are guilty of a partial falling away from the truth, provided they retain in its purity so much of the Word of God and the holy Sacraments as is necessary that children of God may thereby be born. When such societies are called true churches, the intention is not to state that they are faithful, but merely that they are real churches, as opposed to secular organizations (*Gemeinschaften*). 4. It is not improper to apply the name 'Church' to heterodox societies, on the contrary, that is in accord with the manner of speech of the Word of God itself. And it is not immaterial that this high name is granted to such societies; for from this follows: (1) that members also of such societies may be saved; for without the Church there is no salvation. 5. (2) That the outward separation of heterodox society from the orthodox Church is not necessarily a separation from the universal Christian Church or a relapse into heathenism and does not yet deprive that society of the name 'Church.' 6. (3) Even heterodox societies have church power; even among them the treasures of the Church may be validly dispensed, the ministry established, the Sacraments validly administered, and the keys of the kingdom of heaven exercised. 7. Even heterodox societies are not to be dissolved but reformed. 8. The orthodox Church is to be judged principally by the common, orthodox, and public confession to

which the members acknowledge themselves to have been pledged and which they profess."

Walther's exposition and defense of these theses, or propositions, won the battle for the truth. They saved the Saxon immigrants from disorganization. As Winter states, the evidence was so clear and convincing that at the conclusion of the first disputation even Marbach declared himself in agreement with the five paragraphs which had been debated and testified to this by subscribing the record of proceedings which was kept. "After the second disputation had been ended, in which the sixth paragraph was discussed, Marbach could not, as it seemed to me, fully come to a decision how to declare his position with regard to this paragraph. But on the following day, when Walther was about to depart for St. Louis to assume the pastorate of the congregation there (his brother having died in January of that year), Marbach calmly expressed himself as follows: '1) I acknowledge that the Christian Church is present here; 2) I have been extricated from my fundamental error; 3) the true Lord's Supper is present here; 4) there only remains for me the question whether I can take part in it.' Pastor Walther immediately instructed him regarding the last point, which instruction was accepted in a kindly manner. Thank God that these church controversies have thus at last come to be aired and that many a soul thereby has been put on the right track again." (In *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, Vol. XII, January, 1940, 126.)

But other blessings were to follow, as the sequel shows. For the studies which Walther made in connection with the controversy at that time and the further studies which he was compelled to make in connection with the attacks made by Grabau (also regarding the doctrines of the Church and the ministry) eventually came to fruition in the two great classics written by this great theologian, namely: *Die rechte Gestalt einer vom Staat unabhaengigen christlichen Ortsgemeinde* and *Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt*.

P. E. KRETZMANN

BIBLIOGRAPHY. — Guenther, M., Dr. C. F. W. Walther; Schieferdecker, G. A., *Geschichte der ersten deutschen lutherischen Ansiedlung in Altenburg*, Perry Co., Missouri; Koesterling, J. F., *Auswanderung der saechsischen Lutheraner im Jahre 1838*; Walther, C. F. W., *Kurzer Lebenslauf des weiland ehrw. Pastor Joh. Friedr. Buenger*; Mr. J. Frederick Ferdinand Winter's *Account of the Stephanite Emigration*, in *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, XII, 48 ff.; Vehse, Dr. Carl, *Die Stephan'sche Auswanderung*; Fischer, Ludwig, *Das falsche Maertyrertum oder die Wahrheit in der Sache der Stephanianer*; G. Guenther, *Schicksale und Abenteuer*.

## Making the Sermon Interesting

"Dull as a sermon!" This proverbial saying sets a very low appraisal upon the sermon. Let us not disregard it, for proverbial sayings are based upon observation and experience covering a longer period of time. Many a sermon is dull, arouses no interest in the hearer, does not grip the heart, is not effective. But the sermon need not be dull; it should not be. Since the purpose of the sermon is to supply the highest need of man, it can be made the most interesting of all forms of speech.

We must, however, admit that the modern conditions under which we are living have made it increasingly difficult to make the sermon interesting. As a result of universal and higher education, an abundance of reading-matter of all kinds, the radio, etc., greater demands are made by the hearers upon the sermon, considered even as a mere literary production. The speed at which we are living and the general unrest and restiveness in the world make it difficult to get and hold the attention for a longer period. The time when people not only were willing to listen to a sermon extending to an hour or longer, but even demanded it, is past. The great attractiveness of modern life, with its many and varied temptations to evil and to placing a wrong value on transitory things, makes it more difficult to make people appreciate and concentrate on things spiritual. It will not do to say, These things ought not to be; the preacher, as a good psychologist, must take these facts into consideration if he would arouse sustained interest in his preaching; for a sermon which fails to interest the hearer, that is, *fails to engage and hold his attention*, cannot serve its purpose, it had better not be preached. This is such an obvious fact that it needs no further elucidation. What should, therefore, concern the preacher, is how to make the sermon interesting. In our discussion we shall have to give attention to the *preacher*, the *content* of sermon, the *presentation of the subject-matter*, and the *delivery*.

### I

I believe that the preacher who has a will to make his sermons interesting can do so. *But he himself must first of all be interested in his preaching.* He must have a firm and sincere conviction of the truth, an ardent desire to impart it to others, and a mind to work.

The Christian preacher must know the truth as God has revealed it in His written Word, and he must first apply it to himself. To the elders of Ephesus, Paul said, "Take heed unto yourselves," Acts 20:28. We preachers are just as human as the great Apostle Paul; but it was he who said, "I, therefore, so

run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway," 1 Cor. 9:26, 27. We should not be like the builders of Noah's ark, who built to save others but lost their own lives in the Flood. The preacher who is deeply impressed with the need of his own salvation will seek to interest others who also are in need of this salvation and must perish without it. The preacher who himself (together with his family) leads a life pleasing to the Lord and enjoys the blessings thereof will be eager that others should also enjoy this blessing. After Paul had himself been brought to Christ and realized what a blessing it is to be a child of God, he was eager to have his fellow-Jews also share this blessing, saying, "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart; for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh," Rom. 9:1-3. Likewise of Moses we read: "And it came to pass on the morrow that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin; and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin. And Moses returned unto the Lord and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin --; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy Book which Thou hast written," Ex. 32:30-32. What a sincere and deep love for the salvation of their fellow-sinners is expressed in these very remarkable words spoken by Paul and Moses!

The attitude of the preacher to his sermon work goes a far way in determining whether or not his sermon will interest his hearers. The preacher must be conscious of his great responsibility when in the pulpit. Said Paul to the elders of Ephesus: "Take heed . . . to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood," Acts 20:28. The preacher's heart must be filled not only with the love of Christ but also with a love for the souls whom Christ purchased with His own blood. The preacher must not only  *speak*  God's message to the people but  *deliver*  it. Content, structure, and delivery of the sermon will largely depend upon the preacher's own interest in his subject, in the spiritual welfare of his hearers, and in his own consciousness of responsibility to the Lord. Only he will speak convincingly who speaks from conviction and from an ardent desire that others share his conviction. Even such a secular orator as Quintilian said:



"*Maxima pars eloquentiae constat animo.*" Goethe, in his *Faust*, has well said:

Wenn ihr's nicht fuehlt, ihr werdet's nicht erjagen.  
 Wenn es nicht aus der Seele dringt  
 Und mit urkraeftigem Behagen  
 Die Herzen aller Hoerer zwingt.  
 Sitzt ihr nur immer! Leimt zusammen,  
 Braut ein Ragout von anderer Schmaus  
 Und blast die kuemmerlichen Flammen  
 Aus euren Aschenhaeufchen 'raus.  
 Bewunderung von Kindern und Affen,  
 Wenn euch danach der Gaumen steht;  
 Doch werdet ihr nie Herz zu Herzen schaffen,  
 Wenn es euch nicht von Herzen geht.

Unless the preacher has the necessary enthusiasm (*Begeisterung*), which is produced by love for his Savior, love for blood-bought souls, and love for his work, he will not be sufficiently interested in his sermons, and therefore his sermons will arouse no interest in others. He must preach as "a dying man to dying men."

The preacher must have "a mind to work." When the Jews rebuilt the wall of Jerusalem, their enemies scoffed, saying: "What do these feeble Jews? . . . Will they revive the stones out of the heap of rubbish which are burned?" But the wall was built; for we are told: "The people had a mind to work," Neh. 4. Great things have been accomplished by men who went at their task with a grim and dogged determination. The path of least resistance is not the one that leads to success. "Preaching Made Easy" is not the proper title to give to a book which is to teach the art of preaching. The preacher who gives little time to the preparation of his sermons, who does not think his text through, who uses only ready-made material, who knows not the world in which he lives, who does not study the needs of his people, who does not try to improve as the years go by, who "does a job" rather than fulfilling an obligation and living up to a responsibility, such a preacher is not taking his sermon-work very seriously, he is not showing that he is much interested. How can he expect to interest others?

The right attitude of the preacher toward his own personal Christianity, toward the people whom he is called to serve, and toward the work which he is to do, cannot be given to any man by a course in homiletics but is a gift of the Holy Spirit in answer to sincere prayer. "Ask, and it shall be given you," Luke 11:9.

And being much concerned about the salvation of those whom the Lord has entrusted to him, the preacher will pray for them also, even as Epaphras, the pastor of the church at Colossae, of whom Paul says: "Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers

that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. For I bear him record that he hath a great zeal for you and them that are in Laodicea and them in Hierapolis," Col. 4:12, 13. Let us not undervalue the power of prayer for ourselves and for others. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," Jas. 5:16b.

Indeed, when a preacher is much concerned about his own salvation and takes his work of the ministry seriously, his attitude will be reflected in the content of his sermons, in the presentation of divine truth, and in the manner in which he speaks it.

## II

Of course, when we are speaking of making the sermon interesting, we have not in mind a discourse which merely relates interesting facts, happenings, stories, and the like, which are irrelevant to the purpose of the Christian sermon. The Christian preacher's business is to preach the Word of God, Law and Gospel, for the spiritual enlightenment and edification of his hearers. All that is included in the sermon, be it taken from daily life, current or past history, literature, or any other source, must have a bearing upon the real purpose of the sermon and must not be told for its own sake. We are not speaking of interesting talks, lectures, speeches, but of interesting sermons.

Can preaching the Word of God be made interesting? It need not be *made* so; *it is interesting*. The Bible is the most interesting Book in the world! The Bible makes man realize his greatest need and supplies it. What greater news value could there be for sinful human beings than that of the incarnation of the Son of God and His substitutionary death and His triumphant resurrection and His sitting on the right hand of God? To questions which the most learned scientists have no satisfactory answer the Bible gives a definite answer, such as, What is God? Who is God? Who made this world? How does God operate in this world? The Bible is the most interesting story-book in the world, containing stories true to life and teaching much-needed lessons for man's temporal and eternal well-being. From various viewpoints the Bible is *the* most remarkable Book. That is the preacher's source material for his sermons. If his sermons are not interesting, he himself is at fault.

The preacher is at fault if he does not present what the spiritual needs of his hearers demand. We do not teach algebra to those who have not yet learned the four species of arithmetic. So we should not teach the more profound truths of the Bible to those who have not yet learned the a-b-c of the Christian religion. These, says the writer to the Hebrews, need milk and not strong

meat, Heb. 5:13, 14. But those who have advanced in spiritual knowledge should not be kept in the a-b-c class. Of course, *fundamental truths must be continually preached*; but this fact need not prevent the preacher from enlarging the Biblical knowledge of his hearers. People are interested to learn what they do not know.

Of course, we must again and again say that all men are by nature sinners, transgressors of God's Law. But why not be more specific, telling how sin came into the world, what sin is (many do not know), what wrong moral standards people are setting for themselves, that sin is the root evil of all evils in this world. We must again and again say that even Christians sin daily. But why not be more specific, telling of which sins Christians are guilty: selfishness, hatred, evil thinking and evil speaking, unforgiveness, unclean lusts and filthy talk, delight in worldly and sinful amusements, keeping company with the people of this world, avarice, wastefulness and extravagance, dishonesty and hypocrisy, lack of brotherly admonition, parental neglect of children, disobedience and disrespect of children to parents, disregard of the laws of our cities, states, and country; and especially, neglect of the Word of God by not attending the church services regularly and not reading the Bible in the home, neglect of prayer, not fearing, loving, and trusting in God above all things but fearing man rather than God, trusting in uncertain riches, loving the world and what is in the world, etc. All these things should be treated, not in a passing way, but they should be clearly developed on the basis of appropriate texts. That will make for interesting preaching.

Of course, we must again and again preach that we are saved not by our works but by the grace of God, through faith in Jesus Christ. But why not be more specific, telling what self-righteousness or salvation by character really means, what the grace of God is, who the Savior is in whom we are to believe, in what His redemptive work consisted, what the true nature of faith is, what the Bible says about weak and strong faith, what great promises it gives to faith, etc. We take too much for granted and too often speak in platitudes. That does not make for interesting sermons.

As a preacher studies his Bible and the needs of his people, he will find many subjects that deserve careful treatment, such as the inspiration, the authority, and the sufficiency of Scripture, the means of grace, the fundamental difference between the Christian religion and all false religions, prayer, good works, marriage, the Christian home-life, the dignity of labor, stewardship of time, talents, and money, the Christian's debt to a sinful world, confessionalism, the angels, Antichrist, predestination, the day of Judgment, the wrong doctrine of the millennialists, heaven,

hell, etc., etc. All these subjects, explicitly treated, make for interesting sermons. They put variety into our preaching, and *varietas delectat*.

Speaking of the content of the sermon, one thing more must be stressed. If a preacher would preach interesting sermons, he must know his people, the conditions under which they live, their particular needs. He must know what is agitating the minds of his parishioners, what their peculiar troubles and trials and temptations are, what they read, with whom they associate, what their business connections and who their friends are, what their home-life is like, how they spend their leisure time, etc. *Pastoral visits to the home will reveal these things.*

### III

But while the most important part of the sermon is its Scriptural content, the *presentation of the subject-matter* deserves careful attention if we would make our preaching interesting.

The purpose of the introduction is to lead up to the theme; in other words, to get and hold the attention of the audience. But how many introductions to sermons fail to do this! Some are so long that the hearers grow weary before the preacher ever arrives at his real sermon. Very many begin with such a commonplace statement that will arouse no one's interest. Why begin a Christmas sermon with the words "Today is Christmas"? For weeks and even months, people have been reminded of it and have been looking forward to it. Why not begin like this: "No room in the inn! Surely, this is not your greeting to the Christ-child, coming anew on this Christmas morn to bring the blessings of heaven to a sin-cursed world." Or: "'Conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.' Sunday after Sunday we recite these words in our Creed. I wonder whether, when repeating these words, we are always conscious of the fact that we are speaking of one of the greatest marvels in history." — The first sentence of the introduction should be striking, spoken slowly and impressively, at once arousing the attention of the hearers.

Telling words of Scripture often make a good opening sentence, as, "Owe no man anything but to love one another," Rom. 13:8. Or, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die," Rom. 8:13. If not done too often, a pertinent story makes a good introduction. Preaching on the text 1 Tim. 6:6-12, the Rev. E. W. Matzner, in a sermon book just off the press, uses this story as an introduction:

"Some years ago a man fell heir to an estate of several hundred thousand dollars and, to the great surprise of the general public, declined the legacy. There was much discussion of the matter at the time and also a great deal of criticism of the man's action.

He finally made a statement to this effect: 'I have always been able to earn a living sufficient for myself and my family, and that fact has to a large extent constituted my pride and my joy in life; I should feel rather useless if I were no longer required for that purpose. We have a comfortable home, all the real necessities of life, and a good many sensible luxuries besides. Our children are getting a good education, have a wholesome sense of responsibility, and already have plans made as to their occupation in life. We are happy just as we are and deem it unwise to jeopardize the present state of affairs just for the sake of a lot of money that would very likely not make us any happier and might bring us much grief.' I do not know whether or not the man was a Christian, but certainly his ideas regarding wealth go very well with the Christian's view of things. Our text for this morning suggests the subject 'The Christian's Attitude toward Getting Rich.'"

I have given much space to the introduction because I believe that it is here where a preacher, as a rule, gains or loses his audience. But if by his introduction he has gotten the attention of his hearers, he must not disappoint them in his sermon proper. His theme must present the specific, not a mere general, thought of his text. His parts should be a division of the theme, the theme being divided according to its splitting point (*fundamentum dividendi*). Theme and parts should be expressed in plain, simple English, easily understood. As a rule, theme and parts should be announced after the introduction. People like to know what they may expect to hear; it will help to get their attention. Some preachers, who prefer to keep their audience in suspense, may find that by doing so they suspend attention.

The preacher who would have an interested audience ought to give much attention to his language. He should use good, simple, easily understood English, or whatever language he may be using. Especially the young preacher should carefully write his sermons. Very few young men are such masters of the language that they can speak well on the basis of an outline. Writing also helps to clarify thought in the preacher's own mind. Preaching over the heads of the people is not due to profundity of thought but to a lack of clear presentation. The fault also with many sermons is that they contain many words but little thought. "*Viel Geschrei und wenig Wille!*"

In order to present a theme clearly and interestingly, there must be an orderly development, a logical progression of thought, with proper transitions.

The use of illustrations (picturesque words and phrases, similes and metaphors, short stories) makes for interesting preaching. The human mind thinks in pictures. Sermons by



Guthrie (his three P's: proving, *painting*, persuading), MacLaren, and others, may be studied for the effective use of illustration. A few examples taken from MacLaren's sermon on Rom. 12:1 are herewith given: "In Paul's notion all the practical is to be built upon all the doctrinal. There are many men that say: 'Give us the morality of the New Testament; never mind about the theology.' But you cannot get the morality without the theology, unless you like to have rootless flowers and lamps without oil. . . . The most orthodox orthodoxy, divorced from practice, is like the dried flowers which botanists put between sheets of blotting-paper, with no perfume nor color nor growth nor life in them — the skeletons of dead beauty. . . . The diffused and wide-shining mercies which stream from the Father's heart are all, as it were, focused as through a burning-glass into one strong beam, which can kindle the greenest wood and melt the thick-ribbed ice. . . . There is one magnet strong enough to draw reluctant hearts and reluctant limbs, and that is Jesus lifted up on the cross. There is one fire powerful enough to burn the bonds of flesh and sense which hold men, and that is the fire which Jesus longed to kindle on earth. Other restraints from propriety, prudence, or even principle will reach their breaking point at a much lower strain than the silken bonds in which Christ's love leads the lion and the bear of our passions and appetites. They are useful and helpful in their places; but 'Gospel temperance,' a self-control based on Christian motives, is the really reliable breakwater against storms and passion and self-indulgence. You may try to coerce the corporeal nature by other bonds, they will be like the fetters upon the madman in the tombs. When the paroxysms come, he will rend them asunder as Samson did the withes."

A most important part of the sermon, making both for interest and effect, is the application of the text to the hearers. Two things make the preaching of doctrine dry preaching: presenting the doctrine in the dogmatical terms of the seminary classroom and failing to apply it. Doctrinal preaching is not only basic and therefore necessary but can be made very interesting if presented in the language of the Bible and if the hearer is shown what a particular doctrine means for his own spiritual life. The application of the text, be the text doctrinal, ethical, or historical, be it a parable or a miracle text, should not be missing in any sermon; for that, after all, is the real purpose of preaching: applying the Word of God to the spiritual need of the hearers. After a sermon has been heard, the hearer should not only be able to tell in a few words what the preacher has said, but he should have been spiritually edified. A preacher can put himself to a test if he will on Monday examine his catechumen class in reference to the Sunday sermon.

If the children have not gotten the *real* meaning of the text of the sermon, the preacher has failed to put its message across.

The conclusion should be either a summary of the entire sermon or of the last part; that depends upon the nature of the subject. Anyway, in the conclusion the climax should have been reached. It is that sermon's last chance with the hearers, it is the final impression made upon them.

#### IV

To put the message across, the preacher must give due attention also to the *delivery* of the sermon. A sermon may be ever so good in textual content, in its homiletic structure, in its language, in the use of illustration, and in application, *on the written manuscript*, but if the preacher fails to *deliver* the message to his hearers, it is all to no good purpose. A preacher should not be an elocutionist, he is not an actor on the stage; he need not be a great orator, displaying elaborate rhetoric; but he must be eloquent, must be *easily and agreeably understood*. Speaking in a good conversational tone and manner, distinctly, loudly, with animation and due modulation of the voice, not too rapidly and not too slowly, and observing the pause for emphasis and understanding, back of all of which must be the preacher's own conviction of the truth, his whole-hearted sincerity, a love for the Savior and His people: that is good delivery. The preacher should not stand in the pulpit as though he were a lifeless statue nor talk as if he were a mere phonograph, but speak as a living human being, the ambassador for Christ, praying in Christ's stead that sinners be reconciled to God, 2 Cor. 5:20, and beseeching Christians by the mercies of God to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, Rom. 12:1.

It ought not be necessary to add that reading the sermon from a manuscript makes for uninteresting preaching. Interesting and effective preaching calls for *free delivery*. The preacher who is a slave to his manuscript is not fully the master of his subject and cannot put into action his whole body (facial expression, gestures) nor that interplay between the speaker and his audience which makes for a better understanding.

Finally, after all has been said, the preacher must keep in mind that that which can produce and strengthen justifying faith and true sanctification is *the Word of God* and that all that makes the sermon interesting is but a means to this end, the non-observance of which might hinder the Holy Spirit from operating in the hearts of men through *His Word*. JOHN H. C. FRITZ

---

### The Resurrection of Saints at the Death of Christ

The death of Jesus on the cross was accompanied by some astounding miracles, which are enumerated in Matt. 27:51-53: "And, behold, the veil of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the earth did quake and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose and came out of the graves after His resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared unto many."

Much has been said, more can be said, about each of these miracles; but this article concerns itself with, and restricts itself to, the last-mentioned occurrence: the opening of the graves and the resurrection of saints.

*Did these saints arise with mortal bodies or with glorified bodies?*

If we read these words carefully, we find that the account is very vivid, as evidenced by the interjection "behold" and the connective "and" repeated after each miracle. Reading these verses with simplicity of mind, we learn that, when Jesus yielded up the ghost, there were a number of happenings: the veil of the Temple was rent in twain; the earth did quake; the rocks were rent; the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose. As far as we are able to find, there was never a voice heard among the interpreters of Scripture which did not look upon these events as happening simultaneously, and indeed that is the plain meaning of vv. 51 and 52.

Devoting our special study to the second part of v. 52 and v. 53, we read that the bodies of the saints that slept arose. Later on we read that they came out of the graves and went into the holy city and appeared unto many. Our Bible therefore distinguishes between arising and coming out of their graves, and this is in entire harmony with the original Greek. The Greek uses the word ἡγέρθησαν, the Pass. Aor. of ἐγείρω, "to rouse from sleep." The form may be translated, "They were awakened" or, "They woke up." Both fit well into the context. Only the body sleeps, only the body can awaken. Since death is here called sleep, the awakening from death can be nothing else than the return to life. Thus we find that, when these graves were opened, the bodies in those graves returned to life when they were awakened by God. The words simply can mean nothing else, neither do we know of any one who interprets them otherwise.

V. 53 makes three further statements concerning these saints. The subject now is οἱ ἄγιοι, as seen from the masculine form of the participle. The sentence has two predicates: they "went into the holy city"; they "appeared unto many." Besides these predicates

there is the participle ἐξελθόντες. A translation that would give force to the participle construction would read about as follows: "And having come out of their graves, they went into the holy city." We note that the bodies were brought back to life — they came out of their graves; they went into the holy city and appeared unto many. So far everything is easy. But now we find the further words μετὰ τὴν ἔγερσιν αὐτοῦ, after His resurrection. These words are easy to translate, but harder to understand because they may be connected with one of two verbs. They can be construed with ἐξελθόντες. Then we translate: "And when they had come out of their graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city." Or they can be connected with εἰσῆλθον, and we would then translate: "And having come out of their graves, they went into the holy city after His resurrection." Grammatically there would be no objection to either of the renderings; and that being the case, we look for other canons of interpretation which may guide us to the proper understanding of this verse. It is an elementary maxim of interpretation that, if two interpretations are grammatically possible, one of them, however, is ludicrous, the latter should be rejected in favor of one that is not. An instance: When we read, Luke 23:43, that Jesus said to the dying thief: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise," we know that the word "today" can grammatically be connected with the preceding words, making the entire passage read thus: "Vērily, verily, I say unto thee today, Thou shalt be with Me in Paradise." We are perfectly right in rejecting this interpretation, not because it is grammatically impossible but because it is ludicrous.

Now, what picture do we get if we connect these words "after His resurrection" with the participle "after they came out"? We have seen that at the death of Jesus the graves opened and these bodies were made alive. Now, if the words "after His resurrection" should go with ἐξελθόντες, we have the impossible thought that, after being made alive, these saints remained lying in their graves unto the third day and that they then came forth! How simple and reasonable is the situation that arises when we connect the words "after His resurrection" with their following action of coming into the city. They were made alive at the death of Christ and, of course, came out of their graves; and after they had come out of their graves, they did not at once enter the holy city, but did so after three days, as witnesses of Christ's resurrection and as an assurance of our own resurrection.

We next read, as the English Bible has it: "They appeared unto many." The Greek word here used is ἐμφανίζειν. We must not only know what this word means, but we must also pay atten-

tion to its voice and tense. It is evidently derived from the same stem as the adjective ἐμφανής, which means visible, manifest, clear. The first meaning of the verb is, therefore, "to make visible." By an easy and common metaphor we may also translate it "to make known." The verb is used ten times in the New Testament and in each instance can be shown to have the meaning "to make visible," "to make known." In secular literature it is used in the same sense.

Looking now at the voice of the verb, we see that it is the passive. That seems to present no difficulty. If the active means "to make visible," the passive should mean "to be made visible," and we should translate our text, "They were made visible." There could be no real objection to such translation; but before we come to this decision, it will be well to study and compare other instances in literature where this verb is used in the passive voice.

We find several passives of this verb in secular writers, one being *Diog. Laert.*, Prol. 7. Diogenes is speaking of the magi who claim that the gods ἐφανίζεσθαι αὐτοῖς, which practically all translators render "appear to them." We do not find fault with this translation, but would state that the form ἐφανίζεσθαι need not necessarily be accepted as the passive since the middle voice would have the same form in the present tense. If we regard it as middle, the translation "to appear" would be an instance of the intransitive or reflexive use of the middle voice. We should, however, probably accept it as passive, and we must not be surprised that even those who consider it so, translate it "appear." It is a matter of elementary knowledge that during the Koine period the forms of the middle voice were being more and more obliterated by the passive. This tendency goes through the entire Koine. But while the forms of the middle were gradually being eliminated, this does not mean that there was no longer a middle voice in later Greek. The fact is that the forms of the passive voice are used for both the passive and middle ideas, and it is always a question of context how such passive forms should be translated, whether they should be looked upon as passive in meaning or as middle in meaning. There is no presumption one way or the other, and where the context does not decide, a translator must not be censured when he prefers to translate a passive form as having a passive meaning. Thus, in the text before us, the translation "They were made visible" could not be regarded as wrong. We are ready to admit, however, that the noted authorities we have for the acceptance of this word in Diogenes as having a middle rather than a passive meaning have much in their favor. A second instance of the passive form of this verb is found in Josephus, *Antiquities*, I, 13, 1, where he speaks of



God's appearing to Abraham, using the form ἐφανισθεῖς. Here we have a passive form which most authorities again translate "appeared." For reasons above stated, we are again willing to accept this translation. We then have pointed to two instances where the passive forms of this verb are generally accepted to have the intransitive meaning "to appear." In this connection it may be stated that Josephus lived close to the end of the first century and Diogenes at least 100 years later. Both of them, therefore, flourished at a time when the tendency toward the use of the passive with the meaning of the middle was becoming more pronounced. Yet both these authors make frequent use of the middle forms also.

The next question is, What kind of an "appearing" is described by these two authors? The answer is: An appearing whereby the deity became visible. "To become visible" may have two meanings: Pike's Peak is a very large and, therefore, visible object; yet it is not visible to a person living in Minnesota. As we travel west, Pike's Peak becomes visible, which means that it comes into sight. That is one meaning of "to become visible," that an object which by its nature is a visible object comes into sight. But that is not the meaning we find in Diogenes or Josephus. Both of them speak of the divinity becoming visible. Evidently this does not mean that the divinity approached and, as it came closer, came into sight. Here we have a case of an object which, being by its nature and essence invisible, takes on the quality of visibility, becoming a visible object. Coming back to our text, we have no objection if any one wishes to translate ἐνεφανίσθησαν "They appeared," in the sense that they became visible, using that term "to become visible" in the same sense in which we found it in Josephus and Diogenes.

A third meaning of the passive (middle) which also comes into consideration is the reflexive meaning, which would fit in very well in the examples just quoted, that the gods made themselves visible to the magi and that God made Himself visible to Abraham. As a matter of fact, that is exactly what happened when God appeared to Abraham; He became visible by making Himself visible. On the other hand, in the historical development of the Greek language the reflexive meaning of passive forms was not very common. The later Greek prefers the English method of using the active voice with the reflexive pronoun. The New Testament has an instance of ἐφανίζεῖν used in a reflexive sense, that being John 14:21, where Jesus tells His disciples that He would manifest Himself to them, and He there uses the active voice with the reflexive pronoun. We have, however, one instance where the passive voice seems to have reflexive meaning, that being in Heb. 9:24, where it is said of Jesus that He entered into heaven itself "now to appear in the presence of God for us," νῦν ἐφανισθῆναι

τῷ προσώπῳ τοῦ θεοῦ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν. Here the word seems to have a forensic meaning. The passage offers difficulty not only for its translation but also for its proper conception. It describes one phase of Christ's state of exaltation; and even here the passive idea is not entirely excluded, since the Bible frequently describes Jesus not as the subject but as the object of exaltation, ascribing the various stages of His exaltation not to His own operation but to the action of the Father, as we read in Phil. 2:9 that God exalted Him. Wilke-Grimm has the following note: "*De Christo coram deo in coelis se sistente*" (concerning Christ as placing Himself in heaven before God). That seems a very good understanding of the passage.

Summing up, therefore, the meaning of this word, we follow such dictionaries as Wahl, Thayer, Wilke-Grimm, Bauer, Ebeling, Preuschen, Schirlitz, Liddell and Scott, and others and translate it "to make visible," or with a common and easy metaphor "to make known," "to inform," and we translate the passive "to become visible," without, however, finding fault with any one who wishes to translate this passive form as having passive meaning.

We now look at the tense of the form in our text. We find that it is the aorist. This tense usually relates an event, simply telling us what happened. It is not generally used in a durative sense, does not describe a condition which prevailed over a considerable length of time, but rather tells us of an occurrence. Thus, we get the picture that these saints went into the holy city and that, when they got there, something happened. They became visible, which means, in full accordance with the meaning we found in secular literature, that they took on the quality of visibility. It is not surprising, therefore, that we now read the next word πολλοῖς, "to many." If they had become generally visible, there would be no additional meaning attached to the word "many." Why should the Bible tell us that they appeared and grew visible to many if they were generally visible, to be seen by every one at any time? We find, therefore, a very definite indication that they were not generally visible.

And now let us inquire into the bearing all this has on the question that we are attempting to answer: Did these saints arise with glorified bodies or with mortal bodies? Before applying what we have learned to the case at issue, we should bear in mind the general rule given in Heb. 9:27: "It is appointed unto man once to die," not twice, but once. To die twice is, therefore, an exception to the general rule, and the burden of proof rests upon him who contends that any individual died twice. It is true that God is Master of His own creation and can therefore make exceptions; in fact, it seems He has done so. In those well-known cases of resur-

rection in the Old and in the New Testament, that of Lazarus, the young man at Nain, the daughter of Jairus, the son of the widow of Sarepta, and the son of the Shunamite, it is generally accepted that these persons were raised with mortal bodies and were therefore subject to a second death. In these cases, however, there was an element which is entirely absent in the case before us: The former were raised from the dead by the Lord in order to restore them to their loved ones. We may therefore presume that they again lived the life of an ordinary human being. God raised them with a purpose which is not discernible in the text now under consideration, giving us no reason to assume an exception to the general rule that man dies once. But it seems to this writer that the language of this text very plainly indicates that these saints had a glorified body. Why should it be said of persons having an ordinary mortal body that they became visible? We find no such words at the resurrection of Lazarus and others who were brought back to life, presumably with a mortal body. A mortal body does not *become* visible, but is by its very nature visible. And, furthermore, how can we imagine a human, mortal, ordinary body which is not generally visible but only visible to many? We have, furthermore, established the fact that there was an interval between their coming forth from the graves and their entrance into the holy city. Where were they in the mean time? Lenski answers that in a striking way: "They were where Jesus remained in the intervals between His appearances during the forty days after His resurrection. God had no trouble to find a place for these saints to stay." Now, while with a very vivid imagination one can conceive of these men with mortal bodies remaining in hiding for several days outside of Jerusalem, being seen by no one, yet the whole situation is so much simpler and easier to accept if we take it that they had glorified bodies and remained invisible except at such times when according to the will of God they became visible to some and not to others.

Giving full weight to the meaning of the words and to the entire situation created by the context, we therefore follow Origen, Jerome, Calov, Ebeling (tract), the *Weimarsche Bibelwerk*, F. W. Schmitt (Proceedings of Eastern District, 1876), Lenski, and others, and conclude that these dead arose not with mortal bodies but with glorified bodies.

St. Paul, Minn.

MARTIN GRAEBNER



## New Validations of Theism

The age-old problem of the rational proofs for the existence of a God has been given prominence in recent philosophical literature. The subject has long been in abeyance, and, in general, interest in philosophical theism has been on the wane ever since the traditional evidences were subjected to the devastating scrutiny of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. Only in Roman Catholic handbooks of systematic theology and of metaphysics the time-honored arguments for the existence of God are submitted as scientifically valid. Revival of interest in the subject is chiefly due to contributions of certain English philosophers to the discussion of natural theism. Among these the works of Dr. F. R. Tennant, Cambridge theologian, have aroused considerable discussion.

Dr. Tennant published a volume of lectures in 1902 under the title *The Origin and Propagation of Sin*, and another, entitled *The Sources of the Doctrine of the Fall and Original Sin*, soon after. Among his important later essays were *The Being of God in the Light of Physical Science* (1905), and his *Philosophical Theology* (1928 and 1930) and *Philosophy of the Sciences* (1932) exhibited vast learning and called forth many articles in endorsement and in criticism. The latest contribution to the subject is a volume by Delton Lewis Scudder, Ph. D., entitled *Tennant's Philosophical Theology*, and published by the Yale University Press last year. While our present study is not a complete summary of the arguments either of Dr. Tennant or of his American critic, the analysis of Tennant's argumentation by Mr. Scudder supplied the groundwork for the following discussion.

Modern interest in the proofs for the validation of the concept of God is chiefly apologetic. In one of the chapters of *Philosophical Theology*, Tennant expresses deep concern for the fact that circles of educated people are alienated from the Church and from religious faith. Because much of the doctrinal teaching of the Church "cannot be assimilated by the modern mind"; because "everywhere the suspicion is abroad that religious faith starts somewhere in the air and is wholly distinct, not only in degree but also in kind, from knowledge,"—for these and other reasons liberal thinkers have been led silently to ignore the truth of religious tenets, and the Church's ministration comes to be concerned with the half educated. Tennant particularly finds cause for this tendency in the claim which has been made for religious belief as being derived from "specific emotions or instincts" or from "non-reasonable, immediate, religious experience." The entire argument of Tennant's later works is directed against this position. Unless we give up the notion, he argues, that religion is to be explained only by a natural

instinct or by a mystic religious experience, we have nothing to offer as an answer to the representatives of science. Scientists generally have taken the position that there are two fields of knowledge in which they could become interested. The one is the great body of knowledge based on observed facts or data, enriched by deductions rendered possible by the application of mathematics and possessing all the unconditional certainty or necessity which belongs to the pure sciences, such as mathematics. The second is the realm of "possible knowledge" awaiting invasion and annexation by further application of the method of positive science; this is the field of scientific research. But distinguished sharply from both of these there is "a dreamland of unproven and unprovable theorizing" in which the theologians are laboring. It was from this reproach that Professor Tennant tried to save the rational approach to the belief in a God.

The new apologetics lays heavy stress on the faith element in science. It purposes to show that the particular faith-venture which is theological belief is really not different in kind from the faith which scientific knowledge assumes. Naturally, the term "faith" is here used in the sense of trust, a trust not based on a reasoning process or on observation. For instance, consider such generalizations of science as the law of cause and effect. In this principle, that every event has a cause, several postulates are concealed which "are neither self-evident nor mutually independent, nor are they capable of complete proof or disproof by experience." Then there is the principle of uniformity of nature. These principles are simply taken for granted by science; they are taken on faith. Tennant points out that it is gross dogmatism to insist that materialistic mechanism is the only concept which explains what we call the uniformity of nature; it may be the result of divine will ordering the world according to some end. "But," continues the argument, as restated by Scudder, "if science is not certain knowledge but a matter of faith and probability, faith entering into the very foundation of its so-called facts and pervading its entire generalizations, then it may be that the theistic explanation is not essentially different in type but only in degree from those theoretical and reasonable conceptions which are scientific."<sup>1</sup> And

1) *Tennant's Philosophical Theology*, p. 35. Compare also Hastings, *The Christian Doctrine of Faith*, p. 94: "Before science can proceed to investigate a single question, she must make a number of pure acts of faith. She must make, for example, (1) an act of faith in the trustworthiness of human reason, that is, in its ability to lead the inquirer to true conclusions; (2) an act of faith in the trustworthiness of human memory, for unless memory is trustworthy, it is impossible either to amass facts or to construct a chain of arguments; (3) an act of faith in the trustworthiness of the senses, for unless the senses can be trusted, knowledge of the external world is impossible; (4) an act of faith in a



so it is with the assumption of a world made up simply of dead atoms, without any spiritual force permeating the universe. Tennant "does not think that science can deny the possibility of their being self-active living monads any more than it can state dogmatically that they are microscopic units characterized by inertia and operating according to impressed forces. The entire operating ground-plan of metaphysical nature may be quite as well conceived as moved in process by a supreme end held in view by a world-mind as by a conception of mechanical action."<sup>2</sup>) The burden of Tennant's analysis of scientific knowledge is to show that no scientific proposition is absolutely certain or true, for scientific conceptions, facts, and generalizations are all derived from an interpretation of a non-logical "given" element in sense perception. Of this reality which is presented in sense-experience for conceptual interpretation by the mind, "the scientist can have only *probable* truth. Propositions about reality are never self-evident but only relatively evident or *probably* certain. They depend objectively upon the control of sense-given data and subjectively upon a volitional faith or trust in the applicability or correspondence of the mind's creative interpretation to external reality."

The argument against making a fundamental distinction between science and religion is summed up with great force by Dr. Scudder as follows: "An unprovable assumption undergirds all scientific endeavor; namely, the assumption that nature is uniform, its sequences regular and repetitious, and, in spite of appearances, its regularities discoverable. Certainly this assumption that nature is orderly and intelligible throughout is not *given* in any one bit of experience. No one has examined nature as a whole to know whether or not uniformity prevails throughout the universe. Furthermore, there are signs of genuine indeterminacy in physical theories of nature which may or may not be assignable to uniform sequence. This assumption, that nature is orderly, goes far beyond

---

number of unprovable principles, generally summed up in the phrase 'the uniformity of nature.' All these propositions are assented to by acts of faith of the most absolute kind. They are not only not proved by science but never can be proved." Albert Einstein, discussing his "cosmic religion," has said: "There is no doubt that all but the crudest scientific work is based on a firm belief—akin to religious feeling—in the rationality and comprehensibility of the world." And in a *New York Times Magazine* article: "What a deep faith in the rationality of the structure of the world and what a longing to understand even a small glimpse of the reason revealed in the world there must have been in Kepler and Newton to enable them to unravel the mechanism of the heavens in long years of lonely work!" It is clear that Einstein, like all great scientific workers, is deeply imbued with the sense that in reading the fragments of the universe that are intelligible to him, he is deciphering meaningful symbols and catching glimpses of the operation of a universal rationality immeasurably greater than man's.

2) *Op. cit.*, p. 52.

experience. To the naturalist it cannot be derived from *a-priori* factors in mind. To such a person it is a pure act of will based perhaps upon the desire to discover or to explain facts according to the causal sequences and upon the practical need to know such sequences in order to predict future events from observed conditions. This situation gives the lie to any assertion that science is free from assumption and from human interest. As a matter of fact, science is based upon both faith and human needs. Naturalism is unable to prove its claim to absolute certainty and absolute disinterestedness." <sup>3)</sup>

The reader will observe that both Tennant and his American interpreter ignore the principle of authority in religion as distinguished from the rational principle governing science. And this is the weakness of the new apologetics. The authority of Scripture is scrapped at the outset and religion made to stand for its vindication on a process of reasoning. Reason, to Tennant as to the Deists, — though Tennant's understanding of reason differs from that of the Deists, — "is to be the sole instrument for the acquisition, appropriation, and judging of truth in religion as in any other field of thought." <sup>4)</sup> He goes so far as to say that the truth of religious belief can be established only by philosophical arguments which exclude the data of religious experience. Scudder defines Tennant's position as follows: "Reason is the sole judge of truth in religion because Reason constructs the idea of God by a complex process of synthesizing inferences from empirical facts of the natural world." <sup>5)</sup> In other words, science is first. Religion arises by reflection upon the facts ascertained by science. If the resulting conclusion of this reflection is "demonstrated" to be valid on the grounds of a "probability," which is not different in kind but only in degree from that underlying the concepts of scientific fact and theory, then the central object of religion is validated.

Now, even from the standpoint of philosophy this is a very hazardous position, and Scudder has every good reason on his side when he says that from a contemplation of nature as it is interpreted by physics and chemistry, astronomy, biology, etc., "it is impossible to rise to valid thought and experience of God by way of inferences from such data." <sup>6)</sup> It is not possible to develop religious ideas out of the facts of scientific research. Scientific theories and interpretations "may lead to a discovery of new facts, but these new facts are always of the same general order as those which suggested the hypothesis. Inferences from *sensa* may lead to a discovery of new *sensa* but never to underlying active causes. In-

3) *Op. cit.*, p. 228.

5) *Op. cit.*, p. 88.

4) Scudder, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

6) *Op. cit.*, p. 98.

ferences from bodies may lead to a discovery of more facts about bodies but not to discovery of other mind."<sup>7)</sup> In other words, religion cannot be validated by reasoning out the existence of a God and His attributes from a study of the phenomena and laws of so-called nature.<sup>8)</sup> The modern deism has no more rational merit than the deism of the early British freethinkers, against which Kant directed his criticism in the chapter on the "Antimonies of Reason."

With reference to the appeal of theologians to rational proofs of God's existence Scudder quotes Rees Griffiths<sup>9)</sup> as follows:

"The ideal-construction theory of religion makes much use of the theistic proofs. Time was when the philosophy of religion was comprised in an examination of such proofs. The certitude of faith was taken to depend, in the last resort, on rational arguments that could be considered valid on philosophical grounds. This natural inclination to resort to such proofs is evidence that underlying this view of religion there lurks an implied belief that the nature of religious faith is governed by the same logic as that employed in the proofs themselves. The proofs are taken and used as if they were a more explicit application of the categories that are involved in the religious attitude to the world and life. This, I would urge, is a perfectly unwarranted assumption. Though the arguments which produce the proofs may all be legitimate and helpful, constituting an effective defense of faith's citadel, they certainly do not provide a complete and satisfactory vindication of faith. Few indeed would claim perfect cogency for any of them."

In his discussion of Tennant, Dr. Scudder takes up the protest of Tennant against deriving assurance in religious belief from the data of religious experience. By this is meant the immediate, mystical apprehension of God. Scudder suggests that there are two difficulties involved in this line of proof. In the first place, the mystic does not experience any other type of God-concept than the one which he has acquired from tradition or authority before his experience. That is to say, the Christian mystic experiences Christ, God, or the Trinity but never Mohammed, Buddha, Brahma, or Nirvana. He experiences what he thinks, *i. e.*, his particular concept of religious reality. In the second place, who is to distinguish absolutely "valid" from a "fallacious" religious experience? — a line of thought which is not, however, given sufficient attention by Dr. Scudder in his further discussion. His argument finally resolves itself into acceptance of certain evidences of *design in nature*, which demand a "cosmic" explanation, that is to say, make belief in the existence of a Supreme Being unescapable.

He notes first of all the fact that nature is adapted to human thought and reason. Study nature closely, and it becomes a medium through which thought and meaning are conveyed to the

7) *Op. cit.*, p. 130.

8) This may be accepted without in any way weakening the cosmological argument suggested by Rom. 1:18 ff.

9) *God in Idea and Experience*, pp. 66, 67.

out  
ds,  
of  
ws  
nal  
ch  
of  
of

he  
n-  
ras  
uld  
on  
on  
ed  
he  
of  
nd  
gh  
p-  
do  
ed

st  
ne  
e,  
ro  
ne  
ne  
is  
t,  
or  
-  
h  
e  
y  
s  
h  
e

n  
-  
e





human mind. "It is as if nature itself sought to convey thoughts which are first entertained in a mind within nature." To assume that behind it all is a mindless mechanism is too strong a burden on skepticism. Nature plainly exhibits the powers of intelligence.

Next in order is the marvelous adaptation of the cosmic environment to living organisms. "Out of countless possible elements and distributions just certain elements (carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen) in sufficient quantities and temperatures were selected to compose an environment in which living organisms can dwell. The selection may have been the outcome of chance or of unconscious purpose, but to the theist the collocations are too complex, unusual, and intricate to be the outcome of chance."

In the evolution of organisms from lower to higher types Scudder finds a further validation of purpose since pure chance could not have made the organisms differ according to such pre-arranged order and plan. Other arguments are deduced, also involving purpose, from esthetics and ethics, concerning which Scudder asks: "Whence come these standards which individual minds do not create out of themselves alone, but which they recognize through their judgments and realize in conduct?"

And so we reach the conclusion that "theism comes to be a more reasonable world-explanation than mechanism, chance, or unconscious purpose."<sup>10</sup>

The details of the validation of theism from the standpoint of the contemplation of purpose in nature—the "visible things" in which man may contemplate certain attributes of the invisible God, Rom. 1:18 ff.—are supplied by such handbooks of the philosophy of science as Bernard Bavink's *The Natural Sciences* (Century Press, 1936) and Ronald Campbell Macfie's *Science Rediscovered God*, or *The Theodicy of Science* (Edinburgh: R. & T. Clark, 1930). Macfie's is the more popular presentation. He emphasizes the marvelous adaptation observable in organic life and in the relations of the organic to the inorganic. In each phenomenon of life, he says, "there occur apparently purposive reorientations and rearrangements of structural units which are never seen in any chemical mixtures or compounds and which cannot be explained by chemistry or physics. I refer to processes of growth, of repair, of locomotion, and reproduction. All these processes display a wonderful versatility and a wonderful adaptation of means to ends. Cells that never did such a thing in their lives before reconstruct organs and tissues according to correct plan and, if the old way of reconstruction be debarred, even invent new ways of reconstruction."<sup>11</sup> Regarding man and his environment he says that they fit together as

10) *Op. cit.*, p. 247.

11) *Op. cit.*, p. 70.

accurately as a million keys and a million keyholes, though the slightest alteration in a single key or keyhole would render it impossible to unlock all the gates of life, at least as we know life. Regarding the evidence of intelligence in the arrangements of nature, Macfie says: "I can, with some difficulty, imagine a man who had never before seen a typewriter finding one on a desert and saying, 'It is a very wonderful machine, and the parts fit marvelously well together and work well together, but there is no evidence of intelligence in it, all the same,' but I utterly fail to understand how any rational man finding beside the typewriter a beautiful type-written poem could still maintain that there was no intelligent purpose behind the machine. Personally, I can imagine nothing more certain, more scientifically and logically certain, than that no casual variation could have possibly produced the apparatus of vision in its multiform relationships, and the apparitions in consciousness associated with the apparatus." Accordingly he holds that evolution by casual variation and selection is an altogether unreasonable assumption.

Or consider the larger coordinations and adaptations: "The activating correspondence between sun, ether waves, and protoplasm; the synthesizing correspondence between chlorophyll, sunlight, and starch; the chemical correspondence between digestive ferments and foods; the mechanical and chemical correspondences between red blood cells, the blood, the heart, the air, were all necessary to lead to the correspondence between the electrons of the cells of sight and the ether waves of light resulting in sight. A cataclysm, a sun, a planet, volcanoes, clouds, rivers, plant cells, tiny germ cells, red blood cells, digestive cells, eyelids, eyelashes, lacrimal glands, ether waves of certain lengths, are all in relation and correspondence with the visual cells of the brain and all cooperative in the final visual epiphany."<sup>12</sup> The deeper we delve into the secrets of the universe, the more evidence that a grand teleology runs through the whole. The entire existence of the animal and plant kingdoms depends on ingenious contrivances and on elements and parts that fit together as purposively and precisely as a million locks and a million keys. And this evidence has become so overwhelming, says Macfie, "we are compelled to postulate a Maker's mind to account for the rational world, even as we are compelled to postulate an author's mind to account for rational words."<sup>13</sup>

12) *Op. cit.*, p. 137.

13) *Op. cit.*, p. 261. Even with his own rudimentary knowledge of the universe, Francis Bacon was led to exclaim: "Certainly a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism, but 'depth' in philosophy bringeth man about to religion; for when the mind of man looketh upon secondary causes scattered, sometimes it resteth in them; but when it beholdeth them confederate and knit together, it flieth to providence and Deity."

And so, though the rationalist's insistence on reason may yield but a deistic concept of God, devoid of religious significance, and while the appeal to religious experience for the demonstration of theism involves a begging of the question and is veiled in many uncertainties due to the impossibility to distinguish between genuine and fallacious experiences, there is accumulating a great volume of insight into the constitution of matter and the phenomena of life which compel the student of science to acknowledge the existence of a Supreme Being, the Creator of all things. For the believer in Scripture there is a validation higher than that of any human philosophy. He knows God not only as the Absolute but as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that by an inner witness-bearing, which comes with an assurance given by the Holy Spirit, who "beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God," Rom. 8:16.

THEODORE GRAEBNER

## Outlines on the Wuerttemberg Gospel Selections

### Invocavit

John 2:13-22

Our text relates a story about Jesus, vv. 13, 19. Jesus means Savior. He is to destroy sin and its corrupting influence and promote spiritual life. To this end He pointed out during His public ministry what was wrong with the Church. Such sore spots were self-righteousness, mechanical observance of the letter of the Law with neglect of its spirit, prayer reduced to empty babbling, and others. Our Gospel-lesson, too, shows Jesus taking issue with forces that wreck the Church from within.

### Jesus Deals with Two Ruinous Tendencies in the Church of His Day

1. *He ousts the evidences of commercialism from the Sanctuary*
2. *He meets unbelief with a reference to the miracle of His resurrection*

#### 1

Jesus' pious parents annually journeyed to Jerusalem for the Passover, as commanded Ex. 23:17; Deut. 16:16. The events related Luke 2:41-52 took place on such an occasion. When Jesus reached manhood, He continued the practice in accordance with His principle stated John 4:34.

For the believing Israelite this pilgrimage had a deep spiritual meaning and climaxed the religious observances of the year. The elaborate services in the central Sanctuary with their meaningful

sacrifices, the heavy odor of incense, the choirs, and the officiating priests and Levites in their ornate garments should have guaranteed a worshipful atmosphere for the Temple and its environs. There should have been nothing to keep the heart of the devout pilgrim from echoing the psalmist's songs of praise in honor of the great Jehovah, the Savior of His people.

Jesus at the first Passover of His public ministry found reality far below the ideal. Deut. 14:22 ff. permitted the Jew who lived at a distance from the Temple to sell the articles constituting his tithe and to use the sums which he realized for the purchase of sacrificial animals and of victuals for the sacred meals. Supplying these and the exchange needed by foreign pilgrims became a lucrative business. With the connivance of the greedy element among the priesthood it had made its headquarters in the very precincts of the Temple, v. 14. God and mammon, as it were, rivaled for the attention of the worshipers. An unbearable situation for Him whose attitude towards the house of God Ps. 69:9 describes.

Fired by holy zeal, Jesus asserts His authority, v. 15. It is not said that He struck any. The scourge was symbolical of the power He could bring to bear if necessary. Jesus did not advocate reform by inflicting personal violence. On this occasion His words, v. 16, addressed to those who sold doves, but meant for all, struck so deep in the conscience of the offenders that they offered no resistance.

Jesus' purge of the Temple stresses the importance of keeping commercialism out of the Church. Commercialism is symptomatic of a declining Church. A glaring example is the commerce in indulgences in the Roman Catholic Church and all the evils in its wake. But Protestant churches, too, must be on their guard lest their commercial enterprises overshadow the real purpose of the Church. Fairs, bazaars, sales, suppers, and questionable financial schemes for the benefit of the Church are not a healthy sign. Let us be on our guard.

## 2

Jesus' second encounter in the Temple was with unbelief in high places. The "Jews," vv. 18, 20, apparently were not the merchants whom Jesus had driven from the Sanctuary, but they were the same enemies who later in His ministry systematically opposed Jesus, namely, the priests, scribes, and Pharisees, although they presumed to be the spiritual leaders of their people. To them Jesus was not unknown. They had heard John the Baptist's call to repentance, Matt. 3:2, and his testimony concerning Christ, John 1:15, 30, 36. However, they had hardened their hearts to both. Now they raise the question v. 18, not so much to reassure themselves, but rather to discredit Jesus before the people. They were unbelievers and sought to lead others astray.

Jesus knew that He was face to face with unbelief and hypocrisy and acted accordingly. He knew that no sign would satisfy these men and bring them to acknowledge their mistake. Wherever Jesus met honest doubt and search for truth, He displayed infinite patience, as with Nicodemus. But His unbelieving opponents Jesus here in short words refers to His resurrection, vv. 19, 21, as the ultimate stamp of approval for all His acts. That is the only sign He has for them. It is the irrefutable proof that He is actually all that He claims to be and at the same time warns them of the judgment that will then follow for those who reject Him. They will have to face the glorified Christ. Let them beware.

These men well understood Jesus' words; cf. Matt. 27:63. Their reaction was scorn, v. 20. The sign that confirmed the disciples' faith in their Lord, v. 21, was meaningless to them. They persisted in their unbelief and continued on the path which led to their doom. Unfortunately these blind leaders led many to destruction with them. How the heart of Jesus who came to seek that which was lost must have grieved over the hard-heartedness of these men!

The Church of our day still has with it such unbelieving leaders. They are those preachers and teachers who deny the divinity of our Lord, turn His soul-saving Gospel into a social gospel, reject the truth that there is salvation through Christ alone, and spread many other soul-destroying errors. God has given us only one approved method to oppose them, and that is by the continued preaching of His powerful Word, and then to remind these enemies of our Lord that they will have to give an account to the risen Christ for their evil deeds.

In behalf of ourselves and of all others who love the Lord Jesus Christ we pray that He would mercifully stem all evil tendencies fostered and encouraged by Satan with the design to undermine the Church.

G. V. SCHICK

### **Reminiscere**

**Matt. 12:38-42**

Some of the most frequent hearers of Christ's preaching while He was on earth remained unbelievers. Pharisees and scribes, great multitudes, — all heard Him often, yet did not accept Him. At all times there have been those who outwardly heard Christ's Word but whose heart was far from Him. In our text the Lord is dealing with such unbelievers.

#### **Jesus' Warning to Unbelieving Hearers of His Word**

*1. He shows them the real reason for their unbelief.*

a) Christ had healed a man possessed with a devil, v. 22, a miracle which His enemies promptly ascribed to Beelzebub, v. 24.



Thereupon Jesus warned them of their responsibility for every idle word spoken, vv. 36, 37. Some of these unbelievers, chafing under the rebuke, proceeded to the attack ("answered Him"), challenging Him to perform a really convincing miracle. (The original about this: "From *you* we demand a *real* miracle.") The implication was that the reason for their unbelief lay in Christ, not in them.

Some people today likewise try to put the blame for their unbelief upon God; they say God's Word has failed to convince them, is too antiquated and unscientific.

b) Jesus pointed to one reason for this unbelief among those who heard His Word; He called them an "evil generation." They loved their evil-doing, pet sins, and indulgence of every kind. Many an unbeliever clings to unbelief lest he have to reform his evil life which he has learned to love.

c) Jesus also called these unbelievers an "adulterous generation." This was spiritual adultery, being unfaithful to God and setting affections elsewhere. The unbelieving Pharisees loved themselves and their honor; they would not curb their pride and self-righteousness. Here was a reason for their unbelief. Cp. Luke 18:18-23.

This is a word of warning to all who hear the Word of God and remain in unbelief. The reason for such unbelief is ever in themselves.

2. *He shows them that their unbelief is without excuse.*

a) The Pharisees of the text demanded a "sign," v. 38; on another occasion a sign "from heaven," Mark 8:11, perhaps some majestic miracle in the world of nature. Jesus had just performed a miracle by healing the man who had been blind and dumb, a miracle which the enemies had explained away. If He now performed a "sign from heaven," they would just as glibly try to explain it away. But in the veiled charge that Jesus had never performed a really convincing miracle they think they have a legitimate excuse for their unbelief.

b) Jesus showed them that their unbelief was without excuse in view of His *coming death and resurrection*, the "sign of the prophet Jonah." Jesus frequently pointed to His coming death and resurrection as the sign which unbelief could not argue away. Cp. John 2:18, 19; Matt. 16:4. See also 1 Cor. 15:12-20.

Christ's resurrection is the great fact today which stands as the impregnable rock against unbelief. Unbelievers often feel this more than Christians and consequently try to explain away Christ's resurrection. Unbelieving critics who have written books on the life of Christ maintain that His biography must end on Golgotha. Different types of modern unbelief are without foundation in view

of Christ's resurrection. The attacks of the theory of evolution, of human reason, of a false science—all are shattered at Christ's empty grave.

How comforting to Christians is this fact since they are daily surrounded by a world which mobilizes all resources against faith in Christ!

c) The unbelief of Christ's enemies was inexcusable also because *His message* given by His representatives in the Old Testament *had been effective*. Thus the evident success of His Word took every justification from their unbelief. The Ninevites had repented although an unwilling messenger had brought them God's message. The Queen of Sheba had come although she but heard the wisdom of one who was inferior to Christ.

Likewise all the millions who through the ages have found refuge in Christ's saving Gospel are an unbroken chain of witnesses to the truth of Christ's Word. Unbelief opposes all these witnesses to the truth by branding as false what the ages have declared to be true.

### 3. *He shows them the eventual result of unbelief.*

a) Jesus prophesied that at some future time the most unexpected witnesses would appear against His unbelieving opponents. In the resurrection, vv. 41, 42, the Ninevites and the Queen of Sheba should appear as condemning witnesses; for these had listened to far less able messengers than Christ. Consequently those who rejected Christ when He appeared in person could only be condemned in their inexcusable unbelief.

b) Unbelief at all times can only expect a condemning sentence on Judgment Day. Cp. John 8:24; Heb. 3:19. Unbelief really remains the one all-condemning sin.

This whole text is a warning to those who reject the Word of God which they hear. Also Christians must be on their guard in this unbelieving world. But to the true Christian there is also comfort in this, that for all times Christ in His death and resurrection is the Foundation on which his faith is grounded.

H. O. A. KEINATH

## Oculi

### John 6:47-56

This is truly a Lenten text, because, as we shall see, it refers to the suffering and death of our Savior. Jesus uses figurative language in pointing to His great passion. We recall that when He, for the first time as far as we know, referred to His death and resurrection, He likewise used figurative language. It was on the occasion of the first Passover which He during His ministry at-

tended in Jerusalem, when He said: "Break this temple and in three days I shall raise it up," John 2:19. The Jews did not understand what He meant by the breaking of the temple, nor did His disciples. If they had inquired at the time, undoubtedly He would have told them. This reminds us that in the prophecies the suffering and death of Christ are often spoken of in figurative language and are referred to in types and symbols, like that of the paschal lamb, the brazen serpent, the sacrifices in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple, etc.

The central declaration of our text is that

### **Jesus Is the Bread of Life**

1. *Just as manna came down from above, so Jesus came from heaven*
2. *As bread is eaten, so Jesus is put to death, offering Himself as a sacrifice*
3. *As bread nourishes our physical life, so our receiving Christ through faith means spiritual and eternal life for us*

#### **1**

In this great discourse Jesus wishes to show the Jews what kind of help and benefits He bestows. They had wished to make Him king because He had just fed them with five loaves and two fishes when there was a multitude numbering far more than five thousand. What they desired was that He should feed them every day without trouble or work on their part. He makes it plain to them that He is not an earthly but a spiritual King. There are higher things than bread and money, and these higher things He provides. His language is most striking. He calls Himself the Bread of Life.

In Jewish history bread that had been given in a supernatural way had played an important role. It was the manna given the children of Israel in the desert, when they journeyed from Egypt to Palestine; for forty years God had miraculously fed them with this bread. Six times a week it came down from heaven. Jesus was like this manna. He likewise came down from heaven. According to His divine nature He had been in existence from all eternity. We bring out this truth when we say that He came down from heaven and took upon Himself our human nature, uniting the divine and the human nature in one Person, John 1:14.

That Jesus is not only human but divine is something that is offensive to our reason. It was offensive to the Jews. But we must not let our reason dictate to us. How foolish it would have been for the Israelites in the desert if they had refused to eat the bread that had fallen down from heaven because they could not explain

how it could come from the skies! They ate it, and their physical life was preserved. So we must not let the dictates of human reason influence us but take Jesus as a precious Gift and believe in Him and rejoice.

2

When we think of the figurative language that Jesus employs, calling Himself the Bread of Life, we must say that it is very apt. Bread is eaten, which means that its outward form is destroyed. Jesus, in speaking of the service that He renders, points to something similar, saying that His flesh is to be eaten and His blood is to be drunk. It must not be thought that this is a reference to the Lord's Supper. This Sacrament had not yet been instituted, and still Jesus says that everybody must eat His flesh and drink His blood to have real life. How, then, could He be referring to the Lord's Supper, the institution of which was still a whole year removed? Besides, when He instituted the Lord's Supper, He did not speak of the eating of His flesh but of the eating of His body. The terminology is different. No, what Jesus is referring to here is simply this, that He will let Himself be put to death and have His blood shed, so that our sins will be paid for and the great sacrifice that is required be rendered.

Jesus in these words points to what is the central fact in the Christian religion: His suffering and dying, the substitutionary sacrifice which He offers. It must be granted that His language is very fitting. He had spoken of Himself as the Bread of Life, and now He continues employing figurative language belonging to the sphere of food to make plain that He would have to suffer and die; He speaks of the giving of His flesh and the shedding of His blood. These expressions harmonize with the general theme, stating that He is the Bread of Life.

That Jesus must die to help us is likewise offensive to human reason. Cf. 1 Cor. 1:18, 23. Let us not listen to its dictates.

3

Jesus is the Bread of Life in a third sense. If bread is to help a person, it has to be received. It must be eaten and digested. The mere fact that a person has bread in his house will not keep him alive. *Looking* at bread will not give him any strength. If Jesus, the Bread of Life, is to furnish us any help, we must receive Him. The mere fact that He offered His sacrifice for men does not put the whole human race into heaven. He must be appropriated by the individual.

How is Jesus received? He tells us, v. 47: "He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life." It is clear, then, that when Jesus speaks of the eating of this Bread and of the eating of His flesh and of the drinking of His blood, He points to our receiving Him by

faith. We speak of this eating and drinking as a spiritual eating and drinking.

Is it not very extraordinary that Jesus should call receiving Him in faith an eating of His flesh and a drinking of His blood? Not at all. He merely continues the figurative language with which He began when He called Himself the Bread of Life. It furthermore stated forcefully that Jesus would actually have to be received into the hearts of men as the great Savior and Sin-bearer and that mere outward contact with Him, the mere looking at Him, was not sufficient.

Let us learn the lesson. Jesus every Sunday, in the Word, is placed before us as the Bread of Life. In this season of Lent He is with special emphasis preached to us as the sacrificial Lamb whose flesh and blood, that is, whose sacrifice, mean life to us. Let us realize that the mere listening to this message does not suffice; that we merely hear it does not mean life to us. Jesus must actually be received into our spiritual being as food is received into our physical constitution. If this truth is made very vivid to us by the text, then its contemplation has not been in vain.

W. ARNDT

### Lactare

#### John 6:57-69

Our text is the continuation of last Sunday's Gospel selection and stresses the same lesson, so immensely important: the vicarious sacrifice of the God-man for the salvation of our soul. At the same time it brings out the reception which the Redeemer God meets among the sons of men.

#### Life through the Living Son

1. *That is an offense to many*
2. *That is our only salvation*

#### I

Vv. 57, 58. Once more Jesus states definitely the meaning and purpose of His coming into the world. He who from eternity was the Son of the Living Father, cp. Ps. 2:7; Micah 5:2; He whose human nature the Father had miraculously created through the Holy Ghost, Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:35, 37; He, the Son of Man, to whom the Father had from the moment of His conception as Mary's son given to have life in Himself, John 5:26, to live by the Father,—He had been sent as the living Bread from heaven, that every one who "eateth Him," makes Him his own in faith, shall live by Him and live forever. Here is the exact opposite of God's Word in Eden, Gen. 2:17. There God spoke of an eating unto death. Here Christ speaks of an eating unto life.

Vv. 60, 61. That seems to this day a hard saying, surpassing



the reason of man, exceeding the understanding even of Christians, mysteries which no human mind can fathom, 1 Cor. 2:7-9; 1 Tim. 3:16. The former disciples were offended that He who seemed no more than a man (vv. 41, 42) should lay claim to eternal Sonship. Is that not still an offense to many in outward Christendom? And for this reason they are offended also because He claims to be the only Bread of Life, the only Way to salvation. Why should so many "good" people, "noble" characters, be lost merely because they cannot believe that Christ alone saves? These men know neither themselves, Gen. 8:21; Jer. 17:9; Matt. 15:19, nor their need of a Savior, nor the true nature of this Jesus.

Vv. 62-65. In an endeavor to regain those "many disciples," v. 60, Jesus shows that they have no reason to be offended. He points forward to a still greater miracle to be performed by Him whose ascension proves that He was all that He claimed to be, v. 62. He warns them against following the reasonings of their own flesh. The flesh is unprofitable, weak, Matt. 26:41; sinful, Rom. 7:25; 8:5-7; spiritually dead, Col. 2:13; leads straight to eternal damnation, Rom. 8:13. Why follow that unprofitable flesh? On the contrary, the Spirit quickens, and this Spirit is found in Jesus' words. In these words, recorded in the Bible, lives and pulsates the life and spirit of Him who is Life and Spirit. He had spoken these words to them, and they had experienced their Heaven-born nature, their life-giving spirituality, their divine power to save and to sanctify. Why cast away these words simply because they surpass understanding?

Thus Jesus seeks to recall them from the course they have taken, which will unfaillingly lead them to everlasting destruction. He, the loving Savior, knew from the beginning that with many this plea would serve only to harden them, be a savor of death unto death to them, v. 63. "There are some that believe not." As Christ directs these words to us, let us not think of others but ask, Lord is it I? Lord, keep me from unbelief. And let us then heed His warning, v. 65. Most Christians have grown up in Christian homes and communities. It seems the natural thing for them to be members of the Christian Church. They forget that it is a miracle of divine power ("My Father") and of divine grace ("were given"). Let us always be grateful to God for having made us His children.

V. 66. The words of Jesus roused the antagonism of "many of His disciples." They did not want to be told the truth. They went back, literally, went away toward that which was behind, to their pharisaic satisfaction with their own righteousness, to their Sadducean enjoyment of life and its joys. Their disinterestedness in Jesus gradually became enmity, hatred, mockery. They walked no more with Jesus, but with whom?

## 2

Vv. 67, 69. Whither shall we go? With Jesus we have the words of eternal life; words that soothe the heart, refresh the anguished and famished soul, and call it back to life; words whose life-giving, justifying, sanctifying power we experience every day; words that even in the valley of the shadow of death point forward and lead us to the everlasting light and life eternal. Leaving Jesus and His Word, we have only death, spiritual death, temporal death in all its bitterness and hopelessness, eternal death. Ought the choice to be hard?

Jesus is that Christ, the Messiah, who brings us all those blessings promised throughout the Old Testament, Is. 61:1-3, etc. Without Him Is. 1:6 applies; captivity to cruel foes without hope of liberty; broken hearts and none to bind them up; ashes to feed on instead of the Bread of Life; mourning, weeping, gnashing of teeth, instead of joy and everlasting bliss. What will you choose?

Jesus is the Son of the living God. In Him and through Him we are all children and heirs of God, Gal. 3:26; 1 John 3:2. Shall we leave all that and go back to the bondage of sin, the tyranny of Satan, the darkness of hell? Forsake Thee, Jesus? Go away from Thee? Never. Hymn 327. But let us remember v. 65 and let our prayer be: Hymn 340.

TH. LAETSCH

### Judica

#### John 12:20-23

When Jesus appeared in Judea, many asked, Who is this man? Cf. Matt. 16:14; 11:3; 14:2. Jesus referred all such to the signs, which answered their question. It is a legitimate question to ask:

#### **How did Jesus Himself Look upon All that He Experienced During His Earthly Life?**

Our text supplies the answer:

1. *He saw in all of this a fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies*
2. *He recognized each of these occurrences as a proof that the remaining prophecies would also be fulfilled*

## 1

a) Our text tells us that Greeks applied to Philip for an interview with the Lord Jesus. These Greeks were Gentiles who through the Old Testament prophecies had come to believe in the Messiah and wished to see Jesus that their faith might be strengthened.

The Hebrews of the Old Testament were the chosen people of

God, from whom truth and salvation were to go forth to all, John 4:22. They were the people from whom the Messiah was to come. They were also the first who were to be invited to rejoice in this God-man. *But they were not to be the only ones.* God's grace was intended also for the Gentiles. In our text we have a demonstration of this fact. The Gentiles came to the Lord. Jesus recognized this, and when He heard of their desire, He declared, "The hour is come," etc. Jesus saw in this occurrence a fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah, "The Gentiles shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising," etc., Is. 60:3.

b) There were other occurrences which demonstrated this same truth. Even at Jesus' birth the angel proclaimed that this birth was to be a joy "to all people," Jews and Gentiles alike. Therefore not only Jewish shepherds came to His manger, but also the Wise Men from the East, *Gentiles*. (The festival of Epiphany.)

Even in the time of the Old Testament there were many converts from the Gentile world: Rahab, Naaman, the Queen of Sheba, and many more.

All these occurrences were correctly regarded by Jesus as a fulfilment of the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Kingdom of God in the New Testament.

*Application.* — We also should make a careful comparison of the prophecies with their fulfilment in Jesus, so that with full confidence we may say to Him, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

## 2

But the Lord Jesus also saw in each of these occurrences a proof that all else which had been prophesied concerning Him and His kingdom would come to pass. Therefore He answered Andrew and Philip: "The hour is come," etc. He said this with an eye to the future.

a) Even at that time all prophecies had not as yet been fulfilled. Jesus never doubted that God would perform all that He had promised, and every fulfilment of a prophecy supported this conviction. Jesus knew that He was to be betrayed by one of His disciples, that He was to be brought before the council of the Jews, etc. Jesus frequently spoke of all this. He wanted all to learn and to note just this. Men were slow to grasp the full meaning of His earthly life, Matt. 16:21 sq. Cf. John 12:32. This is exactly what He meant when He said, "The hour is come," etc. While Jesus' suffering was a humiliation, yet His perfect obedience to the will of the Father glorified Him in the sight of His Father and all the holy angels, glorifies Him also in the sight of all those who know what He accomplished through His suffering and death.

Moreover, Jesus knew that the prophecy had been spoken con-

cerning His resurrection, and His resurrection certainly was a glorification of the Son of Man. Jesus asserted with great authority again and again that He would rise again from the dead. He knew also that it had been prophesied that He should be in control of heaven and earth and all power was to be given to Him, Matt. 11:27. Yes, Jesus knew that His words would not pass away, Luke 21:33. Thus He was sure of His glorification.

b) And just so we should look upon every fulfilment of a prophecy since Pentecost Day as assurance that all other prophecies will also be fulfilled. As yet all prophecies have not been fulfilled, but we should be sure that they will be. And as Jesus, the Head of the Church, gained an eternal victory after suffering and death, so we, you and I, the members of His body, shall follow Him to glory and to everlasting life and blessedness.

*Application.* — Just as Jesus, when facing His trials, spoke of His coming glory, so we Christians, when passing through sorrow, should say: The hour is at hand when Jesus is to be glorified in me. God's promise assures me of this, and I will believe it with all my heart. That is the faith which overcometh the world.

MARTIN S. SOMMER



---

## Miscellanea

---

### The Bible and War

1. The Fifth Commandment represents forever the fundamental principle governing the relation of man with regard to the body and life of his fellow-men, namely, that man must not commit murder. Ex. 20:13; Deut. 5:17; Matt. 5:21; Rom. 13:9; Gen. 9:5c.

2. The spiritual content and tenor of the Fifth Commandment is even intensified by the explanation given by the Lord when He includes also spite and anger in the prohibition of the commandment. Matt. 5:22; Lev. 19:17; 1 John 2:9, 11; 3:15; 4:20.

3. Yet the Lord has not only empowered, but even commanded, the government to take the life of man in punishment of murder committed. Gen. 9:6; Matt. 26:52; Rom. 13:4b.

4. Under the theocratic conditions of the Old Testament we find both defensive and offensive wars sanctioned by God. Ex. 17:16; Num. 21:1 ff.; 10:9; Deut. 20:12, 19, 20; Josh. 11:18; 1 Sam. 14:52; Prov. 24:6.

5. In the New Testament, in general, war is spoken of in an incidental fashion, and the calling of a soldier is not condemned. Luke 14:31; 1 Cor. 9:7; Luke 3:14.

6. It is the duty of every government to protect its citizens against enemies, if necessary, by force of arms. But God's warning against unjust wars is addressed to every government. Ps. 68:30.

7. Citizens owe allegiance and obedience to their government, no matter of what form this government may be. This includes service in war. Rom. 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:17.

8. While the Apology of the Augsburg Confession speaks of wars as calamities, our Lutheran Confessions plainly teach that just wars are to be waged, apparently making no distinction between wars of defense and wars of aggression.

Apology, III, 70: "David's labors, in waging wars and in his home government, are holy works, are true sacrifices, are contests of God, defending the people who had the Word of God against the devil in order that the knowledge of God might not be entirely extinguished on earth."

Apology, XVI, 55, 59: "Neither does the Gospel bring new laws concerning the civil state but commands that we obey present laws, whether they have been framed by heathen or by others, and that in this obedience we should exercise love. . . . The Gospel forbids private redress. . . . Public redress, which is made through the office of the magistrate, is not advised against but is commanded and is a work of God, according to Paul, Rom. 13:1 sqq. Now, the different kinds of public redress are legal decisions, capital punishment, wars, military service."

See also the Augsburg Confession, Article XVI: "Of civil affairs they teach that lawful civil ordinances are good works of God and that it is right for Christians to bear civil office, to sit as judges, to judge



matters by the Imperial and other existing laws, to award just punishments, to engage in just wars, to serve as soldiers. . . ."

9. Luther also enjoins obedience to the government in serving in the event of war, making an exception only in cases of wars of aggression whose lack of justification can be clearly proved by the subjects of the country concerned.

"It must therefore be concluded on this point: To wage wars against equals must be a matter to which one is compelled and be done in the fear of God. But compulsion is when the enemy or neighbor attacks or begins hostilities and will not offer any assistance if one proposes justice, a hearing, an agreement, and if one endures evil words and mischievous tricks and does not make them an issue but persists in his headstrong behavior. . . . But in all this God's hands are not tied that He might command warfare against such as have given us no cause, as He bade the children of Israel war against the Canaanites; there we have enough compulsion to wage war, namely, the command of God, although such a war also may not be waged without fear and care, as God indicates, Josh. 7:1 ff., when the children of Israel were secure in their campaign against the men of Ai and were repulsed. It is such a matter of necessity when subjects wage war at the command of their government. For God commands that we be obedient to the government, and such a command is a necessity laid upon us; and yet it should be done with fear and humility. . . . The other question: What if my lord were wrong in his declaring war? Answer: If you know definitely that he is in the wrong, you shall fear and obey God more than him, Acts 5:29, and you shall not wage war or serve, since you cannot have a good conscience before God. . . . But if you do not have the information and cannot find out whether your lord is in the wrong, you shall not weaken an uncertain obedience for the sake of an uncertain right, but you shall, after the manner of love, assume the best of your lord." (*Ob Kriegsleute auch in einem seligen Stande sein koennen*. St. Louis Ed., 10:518 ff., §§ 59, 70, 71.) Cp. §§ 46, 51-53, which are addressed chiefly to the government. See also on Is. 9:5, 6:168 f., § 166; on Matt. 5:33-37, 7:460 f., § 228; Lillegard, *The Principles of the Separation of Church and State*, 9-15.

10. Most of the arguments advanced by "conscientious objectors" are the products of an *erring* conscience, one whose ideas are not rooted and grounded in Scripture. One of the most dangerous of such arguments rests on the allegation that, since in a democracy the citizens elect the men who constitute the government, the citizens themselves constitute the government. Although, in a democracy, the citizens may at all times try to influence the government in a lawful manner, it is wrong to identify citizenry and government. Citizens owe allegiance and obedience to the constituted government, Rom. 13:1 ff., except in cases which clearly come under Acts 5:29.

11. As for the individual Christian, Scripture clearly states that he should always be a lover of peace, Rom. 12:18-21, pray for peace, work for peace, and, to the extent of his ability and influence, try to keep his government in the ways of peace.

P. E. KRETZMANN

### Striving for Peace

In the *Lutheran Standard* for January 18, 1941, an editorial appeared which bore the caption "A Time to Speak," which we here reprint:

There is "a time to keep silence and a time to speak." Now is the time for American citizens, for you and me, to speak on the subject of war and peace, of further entanglements in the affairs of the European nations.

Many — perhaps most — of you who read these lines heard addresses on two successive nights (Sunday, December 29, and Monday, December 30) on our nation's relation to the present European conflict. The first of these addresses, delivered by President Roosevelt, pleaded for every possible assistance to Britain short of war as the one way of conquering Hitlerism and preserving our democracy and national well-being. The second address, delivered by Senator Wheeler, pleaded for every possible effort to effect a just, reasonable, and generous peace as the best possible way of blasting Hitlerism and preserving and fostering the welfare of our own nation.

The public press spoke of Senator Wheeler's address as "an answer" to President Roosevelt's address, and the country doubtless took this view of the matter. While both speakers denounced Naziism in unmistakable terms and both speakers emphasized the importance of keeping America out of the war, — two points to which we, too, heartily agree, — there was a radical difference between them as to the best way of accomplishing this twofold objective. Perhaps a fair statement of the two views would be this: Our President believes that our safety and welfare lie in minding England's business; the Senator believes that our welfare and safety lie in minding our own business and doing all we can to end economic inequality and poverty and disease in our own land. The President believes that we must concentrate on helping England and Greece to destroy Hitler and his friends, and then all will be well in our world; the Senator believes that Hitler's rise was occasioned by injustices in Europe, which must be eliminated in order to eliminate Hitlerism, that we in America must concentrate on our own domestic problems, and that, unless we turn from a foreign policy that no longer means "trudging" toward war but "running" toward it, we shall soon make the last state of the world infinitely worse than the first by being ourselves "cast into the cauldron of blood and hate that is Europe today."

On this issue and its far-reaching consequences — who is prophet enough to state how great a stake the home, the Church, liberty, democracy, and every other cherished value have in this tremendous issue? — we, the people, should now speak. As citizens we should speak. As Christian citizens we should speak. It is well known that serious efforts have been made so to amend the Constitution of the United States as to provide for a referendum on war. Under such a war-referendum amendment the Congress would have no authority to declare war (save in the event of an invasion of the United States or its territorial possessions) until a proposed declaration of war was confirmed by a majority of all votes cast thereon in a nation-wide referendum. No such con-

stitutional amendment has been passed, but certainly it is our privilege, nay, our duty, as citizens in a democracy to "vote" on the question of war and peace at this critical time, even though we do not go to the polls to do so. We can "vote" by writing to our respective Senators and Congressmen. If we want our nation to stay out of this war and are convinced that President Roosevelt's plan for all possible aid to Britain is the best way to keep us out, then we should so inform our representatives. If we are convinced that to do everything possible "short of war" is in itself undeclared war and dangerously likely to get us into total war, we should make that very plain in letters to our representatives. If, as Christian citizens, we think about these matters, pray about them, and honestly and earnestly desire to do God's will and to make our influence felt on the side that will best promote the good estate of all men, we need not be ashamed to let our voice be heard. Rather let us be ashamed if we fail to let our voice be heard. Perhaps we shall not all think and speak alike. Let us think and speak nevertheless; for there are powerful forces, selfish forces, unscrupulous forces, that are only too glad to do our thinking and our speaking for us—and then let us and our children bear the awful consequences of their selfishness and our apathy. Well did Senator Wheeler declare in his radio address:

"I do not believe that the great majority of our people are eager to be embraced by war—and I call upon them not to be afraid to say so."

Some of our districts and conferences have already gone on record on the matter of neutrality and peace. It is well at this time to recall resolutions which were passed when the danger of war was not as imminent as it is today and to echo such resolutions in our letters to Washington today. Here, for example, are some paragraphs from the resolutions adopted by our Texas District last April:

"WHEREAS, The United States is being flooded with propaganda intended to draw it into this impending holocaust of destruction; and

"WHEREAS, Internal subversive elements are at this time endangering our democratic principles and with them the freedom of religion, of speech, and of the press and are thereby undermining our American form of government with all its precious institutions; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the Texas District of the A. L. C. . . . is of the conviction that the cause of democracy, of freedom, and of justice can best be served by the United States of America:

"1. If the United States remain strictly neutral in this present war, conscientiously observing the advice of George Washington concerning 'foreign entanglements,' lest, by being drawn into the war, the United States sacrifice its own liberty and, in consequence, lose its opportunity to give sane directives for the rebuilding of a devastated, impoverished, and despairing Europe when the war is ended.

"2. If every honest effort be made to uncover any and all subversive activities in our land.

"3. If we firmly stand by the principle of religious freedom as well as the principle of separation of Church and State and oppose any movement that militates against these principles.

"4. If we bear in mind that all peace efforts and social or economic

cures will fail until the people of the United States again return to faith in God and to His moral order.

*"Therefore we call upon*

"1. The churches and their people to proclaim with renewed emphasis such return to faith in God and His moral order.

"2. The Government of the United States that it do all within its power to keep our beloved country out of the European conflict.

"3. The press of the land to counteract the evil results of foreign propaganda by presenting facts in their true light.

"4. Pastors of churches fearlessly to testify against sin, setting forth its destructive consequences, and energetically to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the only remedy for the individual and society in these dark days."

Brethren, we pleaded with you to vote at the last national election. That was important. Here is something still more important: to speak, to write to your Senators and Congressmen on the subject of America's neutrality and her contributions to world peace. Now is the time to speak. Soon it may be too late.—

This concludes the editorial. Whether, when the readers get to see these words, we shall still be enjoying the blessings of peace, we of course do not know. Our fervent prayer is that God preserve this great blessing to us and our country. With respect to the editorial we merely submit a few brief comments.

1) It is the duty of every citizen to oppose every unjustified war and work for peace as long as that can be legitimately done.

2) Inasmuch as what has just been said is a moral duty resting on declarations of the Scriptures and the voice of conscience, it is the duty of the Church to preach it.

3) After the Church has set forth what the Bible states with reference to the attitude of God's children toward war and peace, it has done what it can do. It cannot go beyond the Scriptures. Its authority to speak ends where Scripture teaching ends. Whether a certain war is justified or not must be decided by the government and the citizens of a certain country and is not a matter that is subject to the judgment of the Church. This is one reason why the Church can remain united even though the opinions of its members differ as to the course to be pursued with respect to any particular war.

4) We hope of course that all our Christians, all the members of our Church, will seek earnestly and conscientiously to apply the teachings of the Holy Scriptures with respect to the crisis which confronts us.

A.

### The Word and the Sacraments

"In *Christian Dogmatics* you write that 'the divine Law is rightly excluded from the means of grace.' (Cf. Dr. Pieper: '*Gnadenmittel ist . . . das Wort von der Versöhnung oder das Wort des Evangeliums.*' *Christl. Dog.*, III:124.) As the divinely ordained means of grace you acknowledge only the Gospel and the Sacraments. (Cf. p.441 f.) But could not

also the Law be called a means of grace inasmuch as through it the Holy Ghost works in the sinner the necessary knowledge of sin, excites contrition, and so prepares him for the saving work of the Gospel? After all, is it not in agreement with our Confessions to say that the *Word and the Sacraments* are the divinely ordained means of salvation? Does not the term 'Word' there include also the Law?"

In answering these questions, let us begin by stressing the fact that the term "means of grace" is not a Scripture (*vox scripturae*) but a Church term (*vox ecclesiae*), so that, since it is not contained in the Word of God, its right meaning and use must be determined (on the basis of Scripture, of course) by those who teach doctrinal theology and, in this case, by *Lutheran* dogmaticians, since, properly speaking, Calvinists do not avow any means of grace. Again, regarding the expression "means of grace," as also many others of similar import and function, such orthodox teachers should not be hereticated as do not employ it in precisely the same manner as do the more cautious and accurate theologians, provided, of course, that they teach the true Scripture doctrine which is stressed by it. Quenstedt, for example, does not wish the divine Law to be excluded entirely from the term "means of grace," though he rightly distinguishes between the Law and the Gospel and ascribes to each its proper Scriptural domain and function. He writes: "When we attribute to the Word a divine power and efficacy to produce spiritual effects, we wish not to be understood as speaking of the Gospel only but also of the Law; for, although the Law does not produce these gracious results directly and *per se*, that is, does not kindle faith in Christ and effect conversion, since this is rather to be ascribed to the Gospel, still the latter is not on this account dead but is efficacious after its kind; for it killeth, 2 Cor. 3:6; it worketh wrath, Rom. 4:15, etc." (Cf. *Doctrinal Theology*, by H. Schmid, translated by Hay-Jacobs, p. 504.) If from this peculiar point of view any one wishes to call the entire Word of God, Law and Gospel, a means of grace, no charge of teaching false doctrine should be preferred against him, since no unscriptural doctrine is involved, and Law and Gospel remain rightly divided.

Quenstedt's words, however, may be cited to show just why more exact dogmaticians recognize only the Gospel and the Sacraments as the divinely ordained means of grace, and not the Law. Hollaz defines the *media salutis* as "external means ordained by God by which God offers to men the grace acquired by Christ and engenders and preserves the necessary faith to accept such grace." (Cf. *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 441; *Kompendium der Dogmatik*, Luthardt-Jelke, p. 330; *Christliche Dogmatik*, Pieper, III, p. 121 ff.) The Law simply does not do these things; it does not offer grace to men, nor does it produce and preserve faith in their hearts. All it does is to point out to man his sin and by severe threats to condemn and terrify him because of his original and actual guilt. The effects of the Law are the *terrores conscientiae*, which do not bring a contrite person a step nearer to God than he was before the Law had aroused in him fear and despair. (Cf. the case of Judas.) The Law works wrath, Rom. 4:15; not salvation, Rom. 7:10. Of course, this *preparatory work to conversion* is both divine and necessary, since only the



convicted and contrite sinner, through the work of the Holy Ghost accomplished by the Gospel, will accept the proffered grace and forgiveness of sins. The Law, so to speak, only *prepares the way* for the Gospel, yet does not render the sinner disposed to accept the Gospel. Nevertheless it remains true that the Law cannot be classed among the *media communicationis remissionis peccatorum sive iustificationis ex parte Dei*, because by its very nature it is opposed to such remission of sins; it condemns but does not forgive.

In the friendly letter addressed to us it was suggested that in this matter even our Confessions do not speak distinctly, since they use the terms "Law" and "Gospel" in a narrow and in a wide sense. In their wide sense the terms stand for the entire Christian doctrine; in the narrow sense they are used in those specific meanings in which they are more than contradictory, to speak with Luther (*plus quam contradictoria*). We admit that especially the Apology at times is using terms in a different sense. Melancthon, for instance, writes thus: "For the Gospel convicts all men that they are under sin, that they all are subject to eternal wrath and death, and offers, for Christ's sake, remission of sin and justification, which is received by faith." (Cf. Art. IV:62; Triglot, p. 139.) Here the term "Gospel" is used in the sense of the *entire doctrine of the Bible*, or of *God's Word*; and, so understood, that which Melancthon here writes is indeed correct. However, when the same Melancthon speaks more accurately, he clearly distinguishes between the Law and the Gospel and ascribes to each a distinct and special use and function. Melancthon thus writes: "Sin terrifies consciences; *this occurs through the Law, which shows the wrath of God against sin*; but we gain the victory through Christ. How? By faith, when we comfort ourselves by confidence in the mercy promised for Christ's sake." (Cf. Art. IV:79; Triglot, p. 143.) Again: "They nevertheless do not find in these works peace of conscience, but, in true terrors, heaping up works upon works, they at length despair because they find no work sufficiently pure. . . . *The Law always accuses and produces wrath.*" (Cf. Art. III:83; Triglot, p. 177.) And: "For, since the promise cannot be received except by faith, the Gospel, which is properly the promise of the remission of sins and of justification for Christ's sake, proclaims the righteousness of faith in Christ, *which the Law does not teach.*" (Art. IV:43; Triglot, p. 133.) Also: "Thus the adversaries, while they require in the remission of sins and justification confidence in one's own love, altogether abolish the Gospel concerning the free remission of sins." (Art. IV:110; Triglot, p. 153.) Or: "For the two chief works of God in men are these, to terrify, and to justify and quicken those who have been terrified. Into these two works all Scripture has been distributed. The one part is the Law, *which shows, reproves, and condemns sins*. The other part is the Gospel, *i. e., the promise of grace bestowed in Christ*; and this promise is constantly repeated in the whole of Scripture." (Art. XII:55; Triglot, p. 265.)

Melancthon, then, had a clear knowledge of the basic and thorough distinction between the Law and the Gospel, and he never considered the Law, in its proper sense, to be a means of grace. In the light of the accurate statements of Melancthon, quoted above, we must understand also Article V of the Augsburg Confession, in which he writes: "That

we may obtain this faith, the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Ghost is given, who works faith, where and when it pleases God, in them that hear the Gospel, to wit, that God, not for our own merits but for Christ's sake, justifies those who believe that they are received into grace for Christ's sake." (Triglott, p. 45.) Melancthon here states that the instruments, or means, of grace are the Word and the Sacraments; but to him the "Word" in this sense is not the entire doctrine of the Bible, in particular, not the Law, but the Gospel alone, namely, the joyful message that "God for Christ's sake justifies those who believe." For this reason it is in full agreement with our Confessions to say: "The means of grace are the Gospel and the Sacraments," excluding from these means the divine Law.

There is a definite reason why we should exclude from the means of grace the Law of God, no matter how necessary and useful in its proper sphere it may be. Romanism and Calvinism so egregiously mingle the Law and the Gospel that from this nothing but work-righteousness must result. Rome, of course, does this purposely, since the foundation of its entire religious set-up is justification by good works. Calvinism does it in consequence of its unscriptural doctrine of the eternal reprobation of the lost and its equally unscriptural doctrine of a limited atonement and a limited *voluntas Dei gratiae*. The believer, therefore, unable to find assurance of salvation in the Gospel's universal promises of grace (which are applied by Calvinists only to the elect), is forced to base the certainty of his salvation on something good within himself, in other words, on the Holy Spirit's sanctifying operation in his heart (*gratia infusa*). But to intermingle the Law and the Gospel means to weaken both in their essence and function: "The Law is not so severe in its demands and condemnations as some alarmist theologians picture it, and the *sola fide* (*sola gratia*) must not be taken as gloriously as extreme rightists suggest." In other words, "if a contrite sinner feels sorry for his sins, even if he should not yet believe in Christ as his Savior, he thereby performs a good work, which merits for him God's favor or, to use papistic terms, some *prima gratia* or even *meritum condigni*." Semi-Pelagianism, Arminianism (and in practice even pure Calvinism becomes Arminianistic), and synergism all commingle Law and Gospel, and all, though from different viewpoints and in different degrees, finally land in the same camp of Pelagianism. It is to avoid this tragic consequence that our orthodox teachers, together with our Confessions, so sharply distinguish between Law and Gospel and ascribe to the Law no saving or redeeming power at all, declaring that only the Gospel and the Sacraments are the *media salutis, per quae Deus acquisitam a Mediatore Christo salutem omnibus hominibus ex gratia offert veramque fidem donat et conservat*. And in the end orthodox Lutheranism must insist upon this *modus loquendi*, since otherwise confusion of concepts and terms is bound to result and the Scriptural doctrines of the fundamental distinction of Law and Gospel will be endangered, and with it the *sola fide*. Antinomianism has no place in sound Lutheranism, but sound Lutheranism demands also that the Law and Gospel be taught "by the side of each other but in a definite order and with a proper distinction."

(Triglot, p. 957; Art. V:15; Thor. Decl.) With what has just been said regarding the means of grace (the Gospel and the Sacraments) agrees also what Luther writes in his great sermon on the pericope of St. Peter and Paul's Day (Matt. 16:13-19): "This treasure [forgiveness of sins] the Church possesses, that is, the communion, or congregation, of those who confess with St. Peter that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. But this treasure the Christian Church distributes *not merely through the Word, absolution and public preaching, but also through Baptism and the Holy Supper* of the Lord Christ; for 'he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.' Hence, if you believe that the body of Christ is given into death for you and His blood is shed for your sins and you receive the most blessed Sacrament of Christ's body and blood in this faith, then you have forgiveness of sins. Since, then, the Church has the command to distribute forgiveness of sins in this manner, let no one despise *such means of grace*, but use them gladly and often; for Christ instituted them not without a cause. He knew well that we require this remedy. . . . Nowhere else should we go than to the *congregation, which Christ has commanded to forgive sins through the Word, Baptism, and the Holy Supper.*" (St. L. Ed., XIII:1179.) From Luther's words it is clear that whenever he speaks of the "Word" as a means of grace, he means that Word which offers, conveys, and seals forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, just as do Baptism and the Lord's Supper, that is, the Gospel alone and not the Law.

J. THEODORE MUELLER

### On the Study of Systematic Theology

An editorial in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Oct.-Dec., 1940, says: ". . . The query rises in the mind of one whose ideals conform somewhat to those of the seminaries of two generations ago as to whether theology—the queen of all the sciences and more extensive in its comprehensiveness than all other sciences combined—has ceased to be what it has been or whether it must now totter about, leaning on two crutches, sociology, and philosophy. . . . If physicians were to give up the study of anatomy, they would commit no greater crime against their profession than the minister is committing against his calling by the present neglect of systematic theology. The situation may be estimated somewhat by the fact that slightly over five per cent. of the standard works on systematic theology are in print today, that a work on theology in a minister's library is hardly to be found, and that the theological seminaries are slackening their emphasis on this discipline by shortened courses and by intruding substitutes. It is no small indication as well that practically all the theological quarterlies have forsaken the field. Is the situation to be explained on the hypothesis that the modern scholar has discovered that systematic theology is unworthy of its former consideration or on the hypothesis that there is something wrong with the modern scholar?" The statement concerning works of theology in the ministers' libraries does not describe the condition in our circles. Nor has our theological journal forsaken the field of pure theology. But the leading thought in the editorial is worth pondering: there is something wrong with the minister who neglects systematic theology.

E.

### Evangelistic Services in Nagercoil, India

In the minutes of the conference of our missionaries held in Nagercoil, India, last summer an interesting report of special Lenten services appeared which our readers, we are sure, will peruse with joy and thanksgiving. Without further words of introduction or comment we submit the report:

Since this was the first venture of this kind that we have attempted, it would probably be best that we give a somewhat fuller report than otherwise.

The Pioneer Picture Palace was rented for Good Friday, Saturday, and Easter Sunday afternoon, 4:30 to 5:30. 5:30 to 6:30 might have been a better hour, but we could have the hall only till 5:30.

A month before Holy Week 2,000 copies of the Gospel according to St. Mark in Tamil were distributed to non-Christian homes by seminary and catechist-class students. In each copy was pasted a printed page telling of the nature and purpose of the booklet which the Lutheran mission was glad to give them and announcing our public services, to which they were cordially invited. The territory covered was charted, so that, if we continue the distribution of gospels, we can begin where we left off.

8,000 hand-bills on varicolored paper were distributed in the streets Monday to Thursday of Holy Week with approximately this legend in Tamil: "This week. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 4:30 P. M. In the Pioneer Picture Palace. Special meetings. Rev. Rittmann, Rev. Peckmann, and Dr. Lutz of the Lutheran mission will speak in Tamil. You are cordially invited." 8,000 more hand-bills were distributed on the days of the services, reading somewhat like this: "Today. 4:30 P. M. In the Pioneer Picture Palace. You are invited to come in and sit down." Posters with about the same wording were attractively painted by Mr. V. Isaac, drawing-master, now studying in our catechist class.

On hand-bills and posters the services were called "special meetings" and not "Christian services" or "Lenten services." No mention was made of the subject. It was feared that otherwise, since the idea of such services in a public place was new, the reaction of the non-Christian might be: "The Christians are letting us know that they are having a big convention, and we may come if we care to." The main purpose of our services, on the contrary, was to reach the non-Christians, whom we could not ordinarily persuade to come to our regular church services, and the idea which we wanted to put across to them in our hand-bills and posters was that these services were being arranged just for them. The "For your benefit" and "No ticket required" were made prominent. However, lest the omission of any reference to Christianity be misconstrued as concealment or deception, the wording on every poster and hand-bill was surmounted by a cross, and the first set of hand-bills specifically mentioned the speakers as Lutheran missionaries. Also, the *Gramma Thoothan*, local Tamil four-page daily, announced that Lutheran missionaries would preach in Tamil on the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

For half an hour before each service Tamil Christian lyrics were

played from records over a loud-speaker placed in front of the cinema. This served the double purpose of broadcasting the Christian contents of the records and of drawing a crowd to the place of the services. The people filled the street in front of the cinema, "listening to the radio." In our poster and hand-bill for those days we made it a point not to omit the "Come in."

Good Friday's service began with a flute solo by Mr. J. Samraj. This was for the purpose of getting the people quiet and in a mood for the service. Then two boys of our Nagercoil Middle School sang a Lenten lyric. A Scripture-reading was followed by "O Darkest Woe! Ye Tears, Forth flow!" In the Tamil translation the first, third, and seventh stanzas bring out the Lenten message most distinctly. A young boy with a sweet, clear voice sang these stanzas as a solo, eight schoolmates joining in alternately with stanzas 2, 4, and 8. Brother Rittmann then preached on 1 John 1:7: "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." The service was closed with a prayer, followed by the necessary announcements. Saturday's service followed the same order, with Brother Peckmann preaching on Matt. 7:13: "Enter ye in at the strait gate." On Sunday Dr. Lutz preached on the Easter Gospel, Mark 16:1-8.

Several of our Tamil publications were placed on sale after each service. None were sold until Sunday, when a total of Rs. 3 worth were sold.

The attendance exceeded our fondest hopes. The hall was filled on Easter, almost filled on the other days, with people standing at the doors. The acting manager of the theater estimated Easter's attendance at 1,500. Though his estimate is no doubt a couple hundred too high, it is perhaps safe to say that the attendance averaged about 1,000.

Though we cannot judge the composition of the crowd very accurately, we believe that the majority were Hindus. Many L. M. S. people and many of our own mission attended. There were also quite a few from the Salvation Army.

The attention was very good. On the last day the children seated and lying around down at the front were kept more quiet than on the previous two days by tactful members of our mission who were seated here and there among them to admonish them in a subdued tone of voice when they got a little restless. A Brahmin later remarked that he was particularly surprised at two things: that missionaries could speak such good Tamil and that a public meeting could be held in these days without the least disturbance. We had no policeman inside or outside the hall. That the attention was good and the sermons were understood is indicated by the remarks heard afterwards. These were not merely general remarks but referred also to specific points made in each of the three sermons.

Brother Schroeder gave very able assistance in taking care of the staging and seating arrangements, etc. Mr. Samraj took charge of the music. Brother Miller had general charge of the arrangements and also served as chaplain at the three services. Brother Strasen served as head usher. One of the most hopeful results of the services was the reaction on the part of a number of our Indian coworkers.



The following is an account of the expenses, which were met, by conference resolution, from Monday service collections:

2,000 copies of Mark's gospel (VP 0-6-0) .....	33-14-0
Rail and forwarding agent on do. ....	5-13-0
Notices printed and pasted in do. ....	4- 2-0
8,000 hand-bills No. 1 printed .....	5-14-0
8,000 hand-bills No. 2 printed .....	5-14-0
5 posters .....	5- 0-0
Rent of cinema three days .....	15- 0-0
Rent of loud-speaker three days .....	15- 0-0

Conference, after hearing the report, urged the Gospel Work Committee to make arrangements for similar services during the Advent season. A.

### W. C. Bryant on Immortality

Writing, some time ago, in the *Watchman-Examiner* on the subject "Our Reasonable Faith in the Future Life," the Rev. Horace E. Hewitt of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, England, submits a section from a poem and a letter by Bryant, the American poet, which shows that the latter's position with respect to death does not find full expression in his famous poem *Thanatopsis*. Mr. Hewitt writes: "In Bryant's poem *The Flood of the Years* the following lines occur:

'So they pass

From stage to stage along the shining course  
Of that fair river, broadening like a sea.  
As its smooth eddies curl along their way,  
They bring old friends together; hands are clasped  
In joy unspeakable. The mother's arms  
Again are folded round the child she loved  
And lost. Old sorrows are forgotten now  
Or but remembered to make sweet the hour  
That overpays them. Wounded hearts that bled  
Or broke are healed forever.'

"A man who had been sorely bereaved was so struck by the unquestionable faith in immortality expressed in these lines that he wrote the poet, asking if the lines were to be understood as a statement of his own belief. Mr. Bryant instantly replied in the note:

"DEAR SIR:

"'Certainly I believe all that is said in the lines you have quoted. If I had not, I could not have written them. I believe in the everlasting life of the soul; and it seems to me that immortality would be but an imperfect gift without the recognition in the life to come of those who are dear to us here. Yours truly, W. C. Bryant.'"

Of course, even so the Christian faith is not set forth by Bryant. What he states does not go beyond the sentiments voiced by Cicero in his celebrated essay *De Senectute* or *Cato Maior*. A.



---

**Theological Observer — Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches**


---

**From the Intersynodical Sphere.**—In the *Lutheran Companion* of February 6 an editorial and an article, the latter by Dean Sebelius of the Lutheran Seminary in Rock Island, appeared dealing with the conference in Columbus, O., on January 20, which was called to discuss especially the case of the "orphaned" missions. We quote the second half of the editorial:

But what did the Columbus Conference accomplish? As usual, the secular press gave a distorted account of what happened. A press-association dispatch emanating from Columbus carried the news to the far reaches of the country that "the Missouri Synod, its membership heretofore distinctly a separate unit," had "pledged cooperation to the National Lutheran Council to further church unity in the face of the international crisis," adding that spokesmen for the Missouri Synod had "expressed willingness to cooperate in foreign-mission enterprises, aid in Army camp work, and suggested future conferences to establish a basis for Lutheran unity."

What actually happened is well told in the account of the conference written by Dr. S. J. Sebelius, which appears elsewhere in this issue. We would merely add here that the traditional Missouri position that there can be no cooperation in externals until inner spiritual unity has been achieved was eloquently presented by the President of that body, Dr. J. W. Behnken. However, he did express himself as "intensely interested" in relief work among the distressed Lutheran foreign missions. "We want to give relief," he said, "but we believe that the relief must and should be confined to physical and personal relief."

Out of the discussion which followed came finally the adoption by unanimous vote of a resolution stating that the Missouri Synod was willing to take over a part of the responsibility for the care of Lutheran orphaned missions and calling for "such coordination of effort" or "allocation of fields" as are agreed upon by the Committee of the American Section of the World Convention and the Committee of the Missouri Synod.

Then came a second resolution, also adopted unanimously, asking Dr. Ralph H. Long, Executive Secretary of the National Lutheran Council, and Dr. Behnken to confer with one another concerning the possibility of coordinating efforts in caring for the spiritual needs of the men in the Army and Navy "and to report to their respective bodies."

Finally there came a third resolution, which expressed the hope that "as occasion may demand and specific common tasks and problems confront us in which coordination of effort is desirable, similar conferences be held for mutual consultation" and that eventually a conference may be held "to consider the whole problem of the fundamentals of Lutheran unity."

It will be noted from the foregoing that "coordination" rather than "cooperation" was the principle which the Columbus Conference tried to establish in intersynodical relationships. In other words, it was felt

that in the present emergency every effort should be made to avoid unnecessary duplication and competition, which might lead to clash of interests and further misunderstandings. And surely, in such a time as this, when the Church is confronted with such desperate problems crying for solution, it should be possible for all of the Lutheran Church to find a method by which its united strength might be brought to bear against the forces of evil and iniquity rather than to dissipate its resources and power in unprofitable and even hurtful dissension.

We are not unmindful of the implications of the final resolution adopted at Columbus. We, too, believe that inner unity is most important of all, although we may not be altogether agreed with some of our brethren in the faith as to the method by which it may be demonstrated or achieved. We welcome, however, the proposal adopted at the Columbus Conference that a future conference be held "to consider the whole problem of the fundamentals of Lutheran unity." May it be pleasing to the Lord of the Church that such a conference be held very, very soon! —

Thus far the editorial, written by Dr. E. E. Ryden, President of the American Lutheran Conference, who presided at the Columbus meeting. Needless to say, members of the Missouri Synod endorse the stand taken by their President, to the effect that cooperation in externals does not mean a surrender of the principle that there must be unity in doctrine before we can establish fellowship with each other. The editorial does not state the Missouri Synod position entirely correctly in the words "There can be no cooperation in externals until inner spiritual unity has been achieved." The sentence ought to read thus: "There can be no cooperation in definitely religious work (such as mission endeavors) until inner spiritual unity has been achieved." Unity? Yes, may the day soon come when it is a reality — that is our heartfelt prayer. But what is the use of talking about "united strength" when we are not united?

A.

**These Plaguing Theses.** — In *The Lutheran* of Nov. 20, 1940, Dr. A. J. Traver "passes on remarks heard at Omaha." We shall pass on to our readers the last section of his article. "The confusing action on the Pittsburgh Articles had everybody more or less dizzy. Seemingly the delegates all had a bone to pick with at least one of the three articles as it stood. But practically all the delegates could vote for the articles as they were interpreted by the president. All are now agreed that the relationships between the general bodies of Lutherans in America can best be cultivated by cooperation in the fellowship of service. It was interesting to note the agreement between the representatives of the United Danish Lutheran Church and the Augustana Synod on this point. President Carlson of the Danish Church said in his greetings: 'We already have pulpit-fellowship without official authority. We are not interested in theses.' President Bersell of the Augustana Synod said: 'They wrote enough theses in the sixteenth century. . . . Now the question is, What can we do together?'"

Some men do not like to be confronted with doctrinal theses. They have been protesting for years against this method of establishing and

demonstrating unity in doctrine. They have protested in these words: "Specific statements (theses) must be prepared, setting forth, logically and completely, in concise phrases, the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Subscription to these theses constitutes the narrow gate through which one enters into pulpit- and altar-fellowship." (See *Conc. Theol. Monthly*, 1939, p. 384.) The man who said at Omaha: "They wrote enough theses in the sixteenth century, . . ." told the A. L. C. convention at Detroit the same thing: no additional theses for him. What is back of this horror of theses? Cannot these men of the American Lutheran Conference understand that, unless the churches agree on up-to-date and clear-cut theses, there can be no true Lutheran unity? Lutheran union becomes impossible when leaders of the Church declare: "We are not interested in theses."

These theses, statements, "Agreements," must of course be clear-cut, unambiguous, complete statements. It does not sound right when we are told that most of "the delegates could vote for the articles (the Pittsburgh Agreement) *as they were interpreted by the president.*" Doctrinal statements which need to be interpreted and which can be interpreted in different ways cannot bring about Lutheran unity.

Note, by the way, that Dr. Traver and the men whose remarks he passes on are aiming at bringing the Lutherans together on the unionistic platform. "All are now agreed that the relationship between the general bodies of Lutherans in America can best be cultivated by *cooperation in the fellowship of service.*" "We are not interested in theses." "Now the question is, What can we do together?" E.

**The Recent Federal Council of Churches Meeting.**—Early in December, 1940, the Federal Council of Churches held its biennial meeting in Atlantic City, N. J. One thing featured prominently in the report concerning this meeting is that the Protestant Episcopal Church entered as a member. In discussions of the situation it is brought out that the bodies which are not affiliated with the Federal Council are chiefly the Southern Baptists, the Southern Presbyterians (Presbyterian Church in the United States), and the three large Lutheran bodies, or federations, the United Lutheran Church of America, the American Lutheran Conference, and the Synodical Conference, although the U. L. C. A. maintains a consultative relation to the Federal Council. Among the subjects considered three loom particularly large: Religious Education, Home Missions, and Foreign Missions. There are three commissions which give attention to the enterprises just mentioned: the International Council of Religious Education, the Home Missions Council, and the Foreign Missions Conference of North America. It seems that the leaders believe that through cooperation in these endeavors the denominational walls will be broken down and unity will progressively be achieved. It was resolved that a special commission be created to study the problem of unemployment. A second new commission is to give study and attention to the question of a new world order resting on Christian principles. A good deal of attention was focused on a document presented by a Christian layman, Mr. John Foster Dullas, a lawyer, which voiced the conviction that a difference of opinion concerning the course

we should follow with respect to the European war must not become a divisive factor in American Christendom. Whether the position taken in the document in all respects is the correct one, we are unable to say, not having seen the paper. But the statement that a difference of opinion with respect to the course we should follow concerning the war should not make it impossible for people to fellowship each other has, of course, our approval. Luther Allan Weigle, dean of the Yale Divinity School, was elected president of the Federal Council and Albert Edward Day, pastor of the First Methodist Church of Pasadena, Calif., vice-president for the present biennium.

Thus this unionistic organization continues to do its work. Instead of making loyalty to the old Gospel as given us in the infallible Scriptures the aim which is to be achieved, outward union is sought. A.

**Dr. Buttrick and the Bible.**—The *Christian Beacon* (Jan. 9, 1941) writes editorially: "People must be informed. The record should be clear. In 1893 the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. ousted from its ministry Dr. Charles A. Briggs, teacher in Union Theological Seminary and member of the Presbytery of New York of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. Dr. Geo. A. Buttrick, a minister in the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., in 1935 prepared a book in which he went far beyond the position of Dr. Briggs in denying the Scriptures and attacking the truth of God's Word. But Dr. Buttrick, instead of being ousted from the Church, has been elevated to a position of leadership. He is a member of the Board of National Missions of the denomination, a prominent conference speaker among young people and ministers. At the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia in 1938, at the observance of the 150th anniversary of the Church, Dr. Buttrick was invited to give the key address. The Presbyterian delegation of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. represented on the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, which included Dr. Wm. B. Pugh, supported and voted for the election of Dr. Buttrick as President of the Council for 1940 (italics ours). His views are well known. Without dispute here is a prominent minister, elevated and honored in the Church, who openly rejects the historic position of the Christian faith. This is for the record. We trust that it will help God's people who truly love the Bible and are still in the Presbyterian Church, to see the true condition which prevails. May they realize that this concerns them and that they are in communion with a Church and with men who honor and exalt unbelievers. This Church at the very time when Dr. Buttrick was writing his book—for it was published in 1935—was taking action to oust from its fold faithful men who believed the things which Dr. Buttrick denied. These men in 1936 were actually put out of the Church because they would not support a missionary program on which men with Dr. Buttrick's views were the leaders and the determiners of the policy. The Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus Christ, is most assuredly blasphemed in this situation. He is calling His own to come to Him without the camp, bearing His reproach."

In a lengthy indictment bearing the heading "Charges and Specifications against the Rev. Geo. A. Buttrick, D. D.," the *Christian Beacon*,



in the same issue, lists nine formal charges of extreme false doctrine against the liberal president of the Federal Council, based on his book *The Christian Fact and Modern Doubt*, published in 1935 by Charles Scribner's Sons. Some of the quotations may interest our readers since they are directed against the vital Scripture teaching of divine inspiration. We read: "The second besetment was the discovery of contradictions in the Bible. These need not be pursued from Dan to Beersheba. If only one self-refutation is found, the doctrine of literal infallibility is slain and pursuit is needless. There are two accounts of creation, and they do not agree. There are two accounts of David's census-taking: in the Book of Samuel we are told that God instructed him to number the people, and in the Chronicles, that Satan 'moved' him. . . . If the Bible is God's explicit Word, does He contradict Himself or offer to mankind mixed counsel? It is no use our evading or trying to hide Bible inconsistencies." "The accompanying legacy of an 'infallible' theory of Scripture was no great gain. Inevitably Jesus joined issue with the letter of the Law. How could God, so radiant and vital in His own life, be imprisoned in the past? And what is this doctrine of an inerrant Book but the assertion that God spoke then and cannot speak now, the avowal that the Everliving is the captive of antiquity?" "Having dethroned an allegedly infallible Church, men dared not make vesture with the 'Beyond that is within.' Craving external supports, they raised an infallible Book to the vacant throne. From that false move and its tyranny we now break free; but with what throes of spirit and what strife of tongues!" "In retrospect it seems incredible that the theory of literal inspiration could ever have been held. The Bible itself makes no claims to be infallible, save in one passage whose meaning is open to dispute." "Literal infallibility of Scripture is a fortress impossible to defend; there is reason in the camp. Probably few people who claim to 'believe every word of the Bible' really mean it. That avowal, held to its last logic, would risk a trip to the insane asylum. Meanwhile we should frankly admit the bankruptcy of 'literal infallibility' and, under guidance of the facts, set out on the long hard quest for truth." "This swift survey of the Bible as reverent scholarship has revealed it, confirms our contention that literal infallibility is an untenable dogma, which we should frankly disavow. If the Book were inerrant, we would still fall short of certainty." "But to Israel was given a strange, vigorous, redeeming sense of God. That consciousness was at the first primitive and vague. It grew, for revolution is the pattern of our life. Its early record was a mythology. The Scriptures of Israel to this day bear traces of a time when, so men thought, 'the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair.' God did not grow. But Israel's thought of Him grew. To them He was many. Then He was one. Then He was power. Then He was stern holiness; and then He was love." "The Old Testament is a collection of their [the early Israelites'] religious writings. In Genesis are their myths and legends, more rich and deep by far than those of Greece or the Norseland. A myth is not a fabrication, despite our misuse of the word. At its best it is the reverent attempt of a primitive mind to explain in story form the encompassing and indwelling Mystery."—"Recently we heard a sermon from the 'Word of God' that 'Christ had

redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us.' Its primary thesis was that we are all cursed in Adam's sin." Dr. Buttrick then narrates that he had four children with him in the pew, and that to spare these children the "clouding of their mind," he left the church, returning later "to apologize to the preacher and to explain." The orthodox minister accused Buttrick of being tainted with Modernism, who thereupon relates his reply: "We retorted, as gently as a fast-ebbing patience would permit, that, though it might have been Adam's sin, it was God's responsibility, who had so ordered His world that all the children of history should be trebly cursed for the wrong of one man, thousands of years ago, whose name perchance they had not heard. Such a God, we suggested, had earned the verdict of the French sceptic: 'Your God is my devil.'" These are only a few of the excerpts from Dr. Buttrick's book which aroused the impassioned editorial of the *Christian Beacon*. In the light of the quotations let the reader once more study the editorial, in order that he may fully understand how far the Federal Council has drifted from the truth to permit so blatant an unbeliever to serve as its head. Churches certainly have a right to ask: "Can Christianity survive?" as they consider such outspoken, unmitigated ungodliness of the leaders of the Federal Council.

J. T. M.

**Nazi Antichristian Fanaticism in the Federal Council of Churches.** — Ernest Gordon, always thoughtful and stimulating in offering his "encouragements and warnings from all the world" under the departmental head "A Survey of Religious Life and Thought," in the well-known and widely read *Sunday-school Times* justly and vigorously strikes back at Federal Council hypocrisy, which would have it appear as if the Council were very much alarmed at Nazi antichristianism (cf. Vol. 82, No. 50; Dec. 14, 1940). As Mr. Gordon reports, the Federal Council instructed a certain Stanley High to issue a pamphlet bearing the title "Watchman, What of the Night? Can Christianity Survive?" Reviewing this pamphlet, Mr. Gordon writes: "It is a compilation of Nazi antichristian fanaticisms from the writings of Alfred Rosenberg, Ludendorff, and others. Much of it is old material. For some of it one can easily find parallels in the literature of liberal-theology seminaries. Thus on page 6 are words that could well be taken from the writings of Harry Emerson Fosdick of Union: 'A religion which bases its very existence on revealed fact totters on its foundations when its facts become no more than legends. The facts of atoning death, assumption [that is, ascension], resurrection, in which the sixteenth century childishly believed, can no longer be taught as historical fact.' That is in Dr. Fosdick's best style. — 'Jehovah has lost all meaning for us Germans,' is a general sentiment among American modernist theologians. — 'The hideous legend of Isaac' is the description of the lovely story of Isaac's experience on Moriah. In Modernist literature the same narrative is put on a level with the child-sacrifices of Baalism. Even the revolting words used in the Nazi writings of the Virgin Birth find implied similarities in the teaching of those who deny Christ's miraculous origin. — Commenting on the newly published and atrociously 'purged' People's

us.  
ick  
hat  
ch,  
he  
mm,  
st-  
n's  
all  
me  
rd.  
c:  
om  
he  
ce  
w  
nt  
to  
n,

-  
is  
-  
-  
y  
r  
n  
l  
g  
"  
f  
e  
e  
f  
y  
s

E  
 c  
 t  
 a  
 C  
 i  
 i  
 c  
 s  
 (  
 b  
 J  
 E  
 s  
 s  
 t  
 e  
 n  
 n  
 d  
 N  
 f  
 n

Testament of the 'German Christians,' the *Junge Kirche*, of April 6, 1940, declared: 'All versions of the Nativity are simply legendary and should be suppressed.' Compare Fosdick again. — 'The account of the empty tomb has been omitted.' Compare Fosdick. — 'Evil spirits are no longer cast out in this Testament. That is mere superstition.' Compare Fosdick. — 'Sinners are no longer saved.' 'Jesus appears stripped of all that is secondary and non-essential and thus His messages are made attractive to thoughtful Germans.' Almost literally Dr. Fosdick. The declarations of the Sunday afternoon orator of the Federal Council thus can be seen point by point to coincide with opinions which their Mr. High thinks forecast the end of Christianity."

Mr. Gordon lets the reader draw his own conclusions regarding the liberal ultraism of the Federal Council, which in its suppression of the divine truth and its ceaseless attempts at de-Christianizing the American churches outdoes in many cases even the Nazi extremists. The German antichristian fanatics at least admit that they are not Christians in the traditional sense of the term; but this very claim has been made time and again by the Federal Council through its spokesman Dr. H. E. Fosdick. The ancient anguished cry of the Christian Church "Watchman, what of the night?" is well in place here in America in view of the fact that the Federal Council is doing all it can to keep Christianity from surviving. We have no brief for pagan "German Christians"; but the Federal Council is the stamping-ground of our own antichristian "German Christians," who are trying to dethrone Christ and abolish the Gospel, and the Christian world owes Mr. Gordon an expression of thanks for directing its attention to that fact.

J. T. M.

**E. Stanley Jones and Clarence E. Macartney.** — E. Stanley Jones, Methodist missionary among higher-caste Hindus, is again touring the country in the interest of the National Christian Mission, sponsored by the Federal Council. In Philadelphia he addressed, on January 12, 1941, a "crowd filling Convention Hall to two thirds of its capacity," as the *Christian Beacon* (Jan. 16, 1941) reports. The purpose of the "mission" is the "revival of spiritual life and the emphasis of the Christian Gospel in all phases of life." To gain this end, "more than 350 programs, union church services, conferences, *seminars*, and public addresses have been scheduled." But, as Dr. H. M. Griffiths of Faith Theological Seminary (Bible Presbyterian) shows, would-be Revivalist Jones has no message by which to bring about a true revival. At Philadelphia, Modernist Jones spoke on the topic "Is the Kingdom of God Realism?" Said Emotionalist Jones, among other irrelevant things: "A great surgeon said to me, I have discovered the kingdom of God in the end of the scalpel. It is written in the tissues; the right thing is always the healthy thing. The psychologists have discovered that there are four great enemies of the human personality — resentments, anxieties, self-centeredness, and a sense of guilt. These four things are not merely spiritually disruptive but mentally and physically and sociologically disruptive. Now, Christianity itself is the opposite of these four things: good will, faith, other-centeredness, freedom of guilt. Take resentments. We know now that resentments are physiological poison. Dr. Stanley Cobb of the



Massachusetts Hospital, in examining hundreds of cases suffering from arthritis and other ailments, found ninety-five per cent. of them had resentments. Take anxieties. We now know that worry and anxiety react into various diseases. For instance, the incidence of stomach ulcers goes up and down with the stock market. Anxieties and resentments can stop digestion. As long as there is a sense of guilt, life suffers from an inner disruption. Anything that can lift that sense of guilt gives wholeness and harmony in the life. We are now discovering that the kingdom of God is written in the constitution of our own beings. The laws of our beings are the laws of the kingdom of God. They are the way life works when it works well and harmoniously." In another address, Kingdom-of-God-mistaking Jones said: "If we are going to be disciplined the way we should be, we must first of all have group discipline; second, self-discipline; and third, God discipline [?]. It may cost much to be Christians in the future. Our heads may be cracked for holding Christian ideas; but if we stand up for the crack, people will respect those ideas in the cracked heads." What distresses Dr. Griffith is the fact "that the whole world of ideas in which his (Jones's) thought moves is something other than traditional Christianity." "It is not a question of taking a phrase or an idea here or there and saying, 'This or that denies or contradicts some article or basis of historical Christianity'; but now that Modernism has taken the bastions and citadels, it is no longer necessary or desirable to emphasize 'theological differences.' A new universe of ideas has been substituted for the old, in which a younger generation is being trained while the old folks grow old and die off." What distresses him still more is that former Fundamentalist Clarence E. Macartney is now taking part in the National Christian Mission, and this together with George E. Barnes, outspoken liberalist and "Auburn Affirmation" signer. The *Christian Beacon*, under the heading "N. C. M.," laments editorially: "Six years ago the Rev. Clarence Edward Macartney, D. D., wrote an article 'Presbyterians, Awake!' in which he summoned Presbyterians to arise and take a stand against Modernism within the Church. This week Dr. Macartney is serving on the National Christian Mission in the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, as it conducts its sessions in Philadelphia. Presiding at the meeting, where he will be one of the speakers, is Dr. George Emerson Barnes, prominent modernist leader of the Philadelphia area, signer of the Auburn Affirmation. We doubt very seriously whether Macartney would for one moment have considered doing such a thing six years ago. Princeton Seminary was once a great banner against Modernism. Now its president, Dr. John A. Mackay, joins with some of the rankest liberalists in the churches of America in the publication of a new paper. Reinhold Niebuhr and Henry P. Van Dusen, professors in Union Theological Seminary, are his associates in this new undertaking. Men once standing for the faith have taken down their banner and are working in the closest of ties with those who oppose the Gospel." There is more than one sermon for us Lutherans in this interesting report of the *Christian Beacon*, especially when one recalls page 8 of *The Lutheran* (Jan. 8, 1941), where "our foreign missions executives" are grouped around Federal Council's close friend, modern-



istic and unionistic John R. Mott, "who bears a name that commands the affectionate regard and gratitude of Christians everywhere." The title above the biographical sketches of the men and women there given in picture and description reads: "These Keep the Great Commission before US." But then, United Lutheran Church ministers are taking part also in Jones's "National Christian Mission." So why say more? — The new liberal periodical, by the way, which prominent Modernist Reinhold Niebuhr, Union Theological Seminary, will be editor of, is to bear the title *Christianity and Crisis*. It is sponsored by nineteen renegade ministers and twelve agnostic laymen, among them Sherwood Eddy, Ivan Lee Holt, Francis J. McConnell, John R. Mott, Robert E. Speer, a rare combination of Modernists, which will make German Christianity look like orthodoxy.

J. T. M.

**Methodist View of the Situation in Japan.** — The Methodists in conference at Atlantic City (Dec. 5, 1940) were greatly exercised over the Nazi influence rampant in Japan. They saw in it a distinct threat to the continued existence of Christianity among the Japanese. That Nazi influence is quite strong in Japan and is actively applied is rather evident; but the reason for the Methodist agitation is not so clear, to judge by the measures the Methodists are pressing. They are working hard for the unification of all the Christian bodies in Japan, seeking "to break down secular barriers among denominations established there, in an attempt to prevent confiscation of church property, as in Germany." This action is being taken at the urgency of the Japanese Methodists themselves, though they claim to have worked for "native leadership in the Church as well as native ownership of church properties" for a long time. The explanation seems remote, inasmuch as Japan's totalitarian temper and her financial needs afford sufficient reasons for her planned expropriations. They need neither urging nor instruction from the Nazis. — *The Lutheran*.

**Christian Science and Lord Lothian's Death.** — The *Christian Beacon* (Dec. 19, 1940) blames Christian Science for the death of Lord Lothian, the popular British ambassador to the United States, writing editorially: "American newspapers and the newspapers of the world are full of the account of the death of the British ambassador to the United States, Lord Lothian. Three different news agency accounts of his death which we saw, said that he was a Christian Scientist, that he declined medical attention, and that a Christian Scientist healer was with him. He died of uremic poisoning. It is a real peril to one's life to turn back upon medical science. Christian Science does this and puts its trust in its own healer. We asked one of the finest kidney specialists in the East if the life of Lord Lothian could have been spared had he been under the care of a physician. He replied that if he had had a physical check-up with a physician from time to time, as all men should, then he would in all probability be alive today. We have known of other cases where people died because in their Christian Science faith they have refused medical attention. This is one of the errors of Christian Science which reveals its falsity. At an hour when Lord Lothian was needed by Great Britain as never before, his faith in Christian Science

led him to refuse medical attention and kept him away from medical doctors. What sensible medicine could have given him the Science healer was impotent to offer. A man's religious faith affects his country more than we realize." This very moderate and carefully worded editorial contains much food for thought in its subtle, but stirring warning against Christian Science as a danger even to the bodily well-being of those who fall a prey to its delusions, not to speak of the eternal woe which it brings upon its unfortunate adherents. Lord Lothian's case might be kept in mind by ministers who must combat in their parishes the deceitful claims and promises for health which Christian Science is using to deceive its members.—By the way, the "physical check-up with a physician from time to time" should not be neglected by any pastor who desires to give the Church long and useful service.

J. T. M.

**Nubacula Est . . . Transibit.** Quite interesting is Mr. Gordon's editorial which, under the heading in Latin "It Is a Little Cloud . . . It Will Pass Over," follows the one in which he compares Nazi antichristianism with Federal Council antichristianism to show that they are very much the same putrid fruit of the same bad tree of unbelief and hatred against the Gospel. He writes: "'Can Unbelief Survive?' is a ridiculous title. The reports of the Protestant Bible societies declare that never has the Bible had such a prodigious circulation in Germany as in the past year. But even more remarkable is the way in which the Word is finding entrance in German Catholic hearts. In *Schoenere Zukunft* (No. 31, 32) we are told that the Roesch Bible and the Keppler Bible, two Catholic translations, have sold to the extent of 1,600,000 copies. Other translations, as Riessler-Storr, the Kloster Neuberger Bible, Herder's Layman's Bible, and the translation of Henne-Graeff are having wide circulation. 'In many [Catholic] families the old custom of reading a portion of Scripture together in the evening is becoming more common. In many priests' homes, both in the city and in the country, Bible hours are being systematically held to ground Catholics in Scripture knowledge.'"

Gordon's heroic "Nubacula Est . . . Transibit" is the believing Christian's noble, joyous challenge of whatever tribulation Satan may bring upon the Church in his attempt to destroy the kingdom of Christ; or, we may say: "It is the Christian reply to Christ's promise 'The gates of hell shall not prevail against it' (Matt. 16:18)." But so far as we are concerned who have been appointed apostles of Christ's holy message, we must show no lassitude or indifference in these troubled times when antichristian fanaticism is rising everywhere to destroy Christianity. It is ours "to fight the good fight of faith," and, as recently a well-known European leader has said, "we cannot survive if we remain on the defensive; we must take the offensive." The attacks of ungodly men call for aggressive evangelistic campaigns on our part by radio, press publicity, systematic opening of new mission-stations, wherever opportunity is offered, and whatever means God gives us to proclaim His Word and expose the hideousness of unbelief. The banners of our divine King will go forward only as we carry them forward.

J. T. M.

**"Masons and Funerals."** — "TO THE EDITOR: I am heartily in accord with the letter in the *Living Church* of October 23 in regard to lodges' taking part in funeral services. Once, at the grave of a deceased friend, I had said the Committal, when the chaplain of the Masons, there present, said the precise words I had used, as if the words of a priest of holy Church were not sufficient.

"I believe in lodges for sociability and for help in times of illness but feel that they should have no part in a funeral where a clergyman is in charge.

"Kings Park, L. I.

(Rev.) G. WHARTON McMULLIN"

*The Living Church*, Dec. 4, 1940

**The Roman Catholic Church** appears to be an English as well as an American problem. This is evident from this account of the situation in England, as given in *Revelation*:

In England the Roman Catholic Church is pressing on in a way parallel to that in which she is working in the United States. The United Protestant Council, in its forty-first annual report, told of the efforts to combat this growing movement. The outstanding activity of the year was the dissemination of a booklet entitled *Rome and the Attempted Conquest of Britain*, which contained details of the Council's protest to the Foreign Office on the setting up in England, for the first time since the Reformation, of an "Apostolic" Delegate. A copy was sent to every member of both houses of Parliament, to all ministers and newspapers in England. Other protests of the year were in respect to Prime Minister Chamberlain's visit to the Pope early in the year, the appeal by the Archbishop of Canterbury for the leadership of the Pope in prayers for peace, the practice of the British Broadcasting Company in broadcasting on certain Sunday mornings during the year exclusive Roman Catholic services in a predominant Protestant country, and the appointment of Lord Perth, a Roman Catholic, as the first head of the Ministry of Information. — *The Presbyterian*.

**The Orthodox Eastern Church**, historical representative of Christian churches of the East, has decided to abandon the old calendar in order to make its Easter celebration fall on the same date as that of Western Christendom. Under the Julian calendar, which was supplanted in most of the world by the Gregorian calendar of Pope Gregory XIII in the sixteenth century, the Orthodox Church Easter fell from eleven to thirteen days behind the date which was celebrated elsewhere in the Christian world. — *Methodist Recorder* (quoted in *Lutheran Standard*).

**About Mexico.** — Mexico's new president, Avila Camacho, has reaped a prompt and generous harvest for his earlier declaration that he was a Catholic and that he would not, as president, tolerate any antireligious agitation nor recognize any antireligious influences in the affairs of government. Archbishop Martinez issued an appeal (December 4, 1940) to all Mexican Catholics to cooperate "sincerely and effectively" with Camacho's government. Commenting favorably on the progress of religious peace and freedom of conscience during the Cardenas régime, the Archbishop expressed his conviction that these noble principles

would be "consolidated and perfected" in the "new presidential period." The antireligious and communistic elements in Mexico are in distinct retreat, for which rapid reversal of fortune they have chiefly to blame their own excesses. If the religious forces now moving to the front in Mexico are wise, they will remember that it was very similar follies of their own that brought about their difficulties and consequent persecutions. — *The Lutheran*.

**Brief Items.** — In response to a request Attorney-General Harry McMillan of North Carolina has handed down the opinion that "all persons who shall deny the being of Almighty God shall be disqualified to hold public office." — *Christian Century*.

From the *Christian Century* we learn that the sect of the Shakers, who call themselves "United Society of Believers in Christ's Appearing," will soon come to an end. If we understand the respective correspondent correctly, he states that on a Shaker estate at Lebanon, N. Y., a small remnant of this sect is left, consisting of 12 aged women and one man. Two other colonies will soon merge. This is a sect founded by Mother Ann Lee. It practiced strict celibacy, and its accessions came from converts and orphans that were adopted.

A vacant canonry at Westminster Abbey was filled by the appointment of Dr. H. Hensley Henson, retired bishop of Durham. It was the English prime minister who made the appointment. According to the *Living Church* the choice cannot be called a happy one, not only because Dr. Henson is a man of 76 but because he has been a strong champion of the disestablishment of the Church of England. If Dr. Henson had his way, Church and State would become separated in England.

It was stated in the House of Commons, September 19, that up to the end of August 51,261 men had been provisionally registered as conscientious objectors in Great Britain. — *Christian Century*.

The Pope has given permission to celebrate Christmas Mass on Christmas Eve — so reports *America*. That Christian people are having their religious affairs regulated by a person living in Rome to whom they blindly submit surely is evidence that the message of the Reformation is still needed.

Concerning the situation in Korea the *Presbyterian* reprints from a contemporary the following alarming paragraph:

"Old denominational organizations embracing some 60,000 Korean Christians were dissolved recently, and a new organization was set up in keeping with Japan's policy of placing religious associations under government supervision and eliminating foreign influence. A new program for the organization stipulated that it would be free of foreign influence and would condemn Communism, individualism, democracy, and doctrines inconsistent with Japanese national policy. Military drill will be enforced in schools, and Christians will be encouraged to volunteer services during emergencies and to visit Shinto shrines."

"A revised Roman Catholic Bible, the first revision in English since 1750, will be made available to the Roman clergy and laity some time

in April, it was announced at the recent meeting in Washington of the [Roman] Episcopal Committee on the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Catholic hierarchy.

"The new edition is a product of five years' study by 26 scholars of the Catholic Biblical Association and consists principally of modernizing phraseology to facilitate reading. For example, 'ye' has been discarded in favor of 'you,' and inverted phrases have given way to sentence structure more in line with current usage."—So reports the *Living Church*. We take it that this has reference to a revision of the Douay Bible.

The *Living Church* reports that Trinity Parish, Princeton, N. J., voted to discontinue the policy of renting pews. The rector is said to have termed this step evidence that his church believes "in the true democratic Christian principle." We are wondering whether any Lutheran church still has the system of renting pews to its members.

The American Bible Society reports that the Scriptures in the depository of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Madrid, Spain, have been confiscated by the Spanish government and removed from the office. Negotiations for the return of the Scriptures have proved fruitless.—*News Bulletin N. L. C.*

Evidence of the vitality of religion under war conditions is emphasized by the annual report of the British Foreign Bible Society. This shows that 12,000,000 volumes were circulated during the past year, 750,000 more than in the previous year. The secretary for Central Europe reports that sales were up by nearly 200,000 and says: "Everywhere in their sorrow men and women have been turning to the Word."—*News Bulletin N. L. C.*

From Hartford, Conn., comes the news that Dr. Charles Thomas Paul has died. He played an important role because for a while he taught in the University of Nanking, China, and afterwards served as the president of the College of Missions in Indianapolis, Ind., a school which later was taken to Hartford, Conn.

The Board of Foreign Missions of the U. L. C. A., according to the *Lutheran*, has cabled its missionaries in China that it believes for the sake of the work the men should stay at their posts, while the women and children may return.

In Upper Burma there is a section inhabited by the Lahu and the Wa peoples. The *Watchman-Examiner* says: "Dr. William Young labored for thirty years among these primitive hill tribes. Now his two sons continue the work. Over 40,000 converts have been baptized. There is Burma-China border in this area, but the Lahus and Was do not know it, and the Gospel has crossed with them from Burma to China."

Dr. Buker and his brother work among a million and a half of Buddhist Shans of Upper Burma. For thirty years Baptists have tried to win the Shans to Christianity, but there were less than one hundred



Christians at the end of that period. Now, however, the Buker twins have baptized over one hundred each year for the past three years. There are scores of villages waiting to hear the Gospel "if only some one will come and tell it." — *Watchman-Examiner*.

A belated correction is herewith submitted. In the learned article of Pastor W. Georgi which appeared in the October, 1940, issue of our journal (pp. 784 ff.), a misprint occurred which renders the statement where it appears unintelligible. On p. 787, in the eighth line from the bottom of the page, "JEsu" should be changed to "jedem," and after "Jahr" the expression "des Zyklus" should be inserted, so that the whole sentence reads: "Man kann durch sorgfaeltige Zaehlung zeigen, dass in jedem sechsten und achten Jahr des Zyklus der 15. Nisan auf Freitag fiel."

"The missionary exodus [from Japan] continues. The *Asama Maru*, sailing last Friday, carried a host of repatriating families. In addition to the missions and missionaries evacuating from Japan and Korea, it is now reported that all members of the two mission bodies which have been working for decades in Formosa have departed or will soon be going. In Japan perhaps the most distressing news is that the Methodists in Hiroshima have had to leave their schools, churches, and social settlement work because of local agitations and a desire to save the Japanese Christian movement from embarrassment. It begins to look as though the missionary *personnel* in Japan may be fifty per cent. reduced by early 1941. Some, however, will remain regardless of various pressures, and it is worth noting that in Japanese church circles there is increasing reaction in favor of keeping the missionaries in places of organized service and of protecting them from unjustified hardship." — Correspondence in *Christian Century*, Jan. 15, 1941.

According to the *Christian Century* the leading members of the Chinese government today are Christians. "A committee of the government chaired by H. H. Kung, finance minister, consulted with missionaries and presented formal invitation to missionaries in occupied China to go to free China. This gesture is supported by the government, which has placed free transportation by postal trucks over all Chinese roads at the disposal of incoming missionaries."

A.



---

## Book Review — Literatur

---

All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

**The Science of Biblical Hermeneutics.** By R. T. Chafer. Bibliotheca Sacra, Dallas, Tex. 92 pages, 6¼×9¼. Price, \$1.00.

For many years Dr. R. T. Chafer was professor of Apologetics and Hermeneutics at the Dallas Theological Seminary. His manual of *Biblical Hermeneutics*, a formal theological science, sorely neglected in many American theological circles, bears ample testimony to his simple, childlike faith in Christ. He treats the hermeneutical material under such heads as "A Historical Sketch," "Axioms of General Hermeneutics," "Four Prerequisites," "Relation of Logic to Scripture Interpretation," "General Rules of Interpretation," "Treatment of Figurative Language," "Accommodation, Rightly and Wrongly Understood," "Interpretation of Prophecy." For his work he claims no originality, since he follows in a general way Prof. M. Cellerier's *Manual of Biblical Hermeneutics* (translated by Elliott and Harsha); nevertheless it is worthy of careful study also by such as cannot agree to his ardently defended millennialistic views. Sound Biblical interpretation, he declares, must lead the Bible student to a belief in the millennium, and he endeavors to prove this by appealing to basic hermeneutic principles. But with the same conviction the amillennialist is bound to repudiate such interpretation as contradictory to sound hermeneutics. The writer thus argues that, whereas prophecy is a "harmonious whole" (?), and whereas such prophecy as has been fulfilled has been fulfilled literally (?), therefore all prophecy as yet unfulfilled must be fulfilled literally, too; wherefore a millennium must be expected since prophecy predicts an era of consummate peace and good will on earth. Such reasoning, however, is basically incorrect. The author's chapter on the "Relation of Logic to Scripture," especially the part devoted to the inductive method and its application to unfulfilled prophecy, appears as a misguided endeavor to prove the millennium from certain Biblical "particulars," which actually exclude the idea of a millennium. Other chapters, however, are more acceptable than those which champion millennialism. The one on "Accommodation," in which the author points out the "tricks of trade" which Modernists employ to do away with the doctrines of the Christian faith, is very fine. Another serious mistake, however, occurs when Dr. Chafer distinguishes between three degrees of authority in the inspired Biblical record (pp. 35, 36). He fails to see that this distinction annuls the very concept of Biblical inspiration and authority. Of primary authority, he believes, are those passages which God Himself approves as true; of secondary authority are such as must be proved true by "the general standards of Scripture teaching"; and of tertiary authority are such as declare the very things which God disapproves, as examples of the last may be cited the "comfort" of Job's friends, whom God censured, or the fool's declaration that there is no God (Ps. 14:1).

The distinction, of course, is based on a misunderstanding of the real issue; for the author admits that all Scripture is given by divine inspiration. The simple solution of the supposed problem is that God, for our learning (Rom. 15:4), has inspired the sacred penmen to write things both true and untrue, the untrue, however, not as His own sentiments but as those of the wicked. These untrue declarations God Himself condemns as materially or actually untrue, though formally they are true; that is to say, atheists actually declare that there is no God, and scoffers actually declare that this world will last forever (2 Pet. 3:3-14). Such substantially untrue statements of wicked men occurring in the Bible neither disprove the divine inspiration nor the divine authority of Scripture; on the contrary, they prove the Bible to be the divine truth, given by Him who knows and judges the hearts and thoughts of men (Luke 16:15). The author at times speaks of one skilled in hermeneutics as a hermeneut. Properly speaking, a hermeneut is an interpreter, while one skilled in hermeneutics is a hermeneutist. (Cf. *Standard Dictionary sub voce*.)

J. THEODORE MUELLER

**The Supernaturalness of Christ. Can We Still Believe in It?** By Wilbur M. Smith, Department of English Bible, Moody Bible Institute; Editor of Peloubet's Select Notes on the International Sunday-school Lesson. W.A. Wilde Company, Boston, Mass. 1940. 235 pages, 5½×8. Price, \$1.50.

In the preface of this valuable work the author says correctly (p. VII): "The greatest battle of our age is the one now being fought by two invisible armies, as they struggle to dominate the minds of men. The one army we may rightly call supernaturalism; the other, with equal accuracy, we shall designate naturalism." We might add that the controversy between Fundamentalists and Modernists, which in the press reached its height about fifteen years ago, but which relentlessly continues, is merely one phase of this tremendous battle. The author of this book has made a helpful contribution to the branch of theology which we call apologetics. One can heartily endorse the work done by Christian apologetics without overestimating its importance. Wherever it removes difficulties which keep one or the other from listening to the Gospel-message, it deserves our commendation and support.

To give the reader a conception of the contents of the book, the captions of the six chapters are set down here: 1. The Denial of the Supernatural in Contemporary Thought. 2. The Historical Trustworthiness of the Gospel Records. 3. The Supernatural Elements in the Birth of Our Lord. 4. The Miraculous Works of Christ. 5. The Unique Transfiguration of Christ. 6. The Historical Reality of Christ's Resurrection. An epilog and an index conclude the volume. As appears from this brief survey, the subjects discussed are vital and must engage the interest of every conservative theologian. Dr. Smith, we are glad to say, treats the questions with which he grapples as a believer in the inerrancy of the Scriptures and in the deity of Christ, our Lord. Hence it is a delight to peruse his work. Here there is no yielding to

the spirit which denies the historicity of the miracles of Christ or of His resurrection. Here there is no willingness to compromise with Modernists by conceding that the virgin birth of our Lord need not be maintained.

Another impressive feature of the book is the acquaintance with the pertinent modern literature which it reveals on almost every page. Professor Smith cannot be accused of having pursued the policy ascribed (some say, falsely) to the ostrich, that of ignoring dangers in the belief that what is not seen does not exist. Antichristian philosophers, such as John Dewey and William Pepperell Montague; radical New Testament scholars, such as Adolf Harnack and E. Renan; and unbelieving scientists, such as J.S. Haldane, are quoted. That the writer has read the works of believing scholars, for instance, those of A. T. Robertson and J. G. Machen, hardly needs particular mention. We are happy to say that the monumental work of our synodical brother Pastor A. Fahling of Detroit, *The Life of Christ*, is represented among the books from which excerpts are inserted.

The longest chapter in the book is the one which dwells on the nature and testimony of the miracles of Christ (chap. IV). The author calls the miracles of Christ "the great battle-ground on which has been waged for centuries the real conflict regarding the reality or non-reality of the supernatural" (p. 109). The treatment of the subject is admirable. A number of important general observations are submitted which help in warding off the attacks of unbelievers, for instance, that Christ's miracles were in the physical realm and could be appraised by the physical senses and that they (at least in numerous instances) were done publicly, in the presence of many witnesses. A part of this chapter is devoted to the examination and refutation of the views of hostile critics. Quite similar is the chapter on the resurrection of Christ (chap. VI). We quote a few of its sentences: "Some will then ask, Well, why don't more men believe in the resurrection, especially some of our outstanding scholars? I think the reason they do not believe is because they do not want to believe, that they have definitely determined not to believe. 'Oh,' you ask, 'do you think any true modern scholar would ever determine in his own mind not to believe in something, however remarkable, if the evidence were clear concerning its reality?' Yes, I believe men will go to such an extreme, because men have gone to this extreme. Let us take, *e.g.*, the testimony of just one contemporary philosopher, Prof. C. E. M. Joad, head of the Department of Philosophy and Psychology in Birkbeck College, University of London, since 1930, once John Locke scholar in Moral Philosophy in the University of Oxford, and the author of a great many influential volumes in philosophy and religion. Speaking of the resurrection of Christ, Joad, as late as 1933, declares that he will not believe in such an event, no matter what the evidence. These are his own words: 'Even if the evidence were far more impressive than the tatter of inconsistencies, divergencies, and contradictions which is in fact available, I should probably still refuse to credit the fact which it purported to establish.'" Prof. Smith comments: "No matter what the evidence is,

because of his own convictions regarding what ought to be in the universe Professor Joad frankly states that he will never believe, let us repeat his own phrase, 'no matter what the evidence.' (P. 221 f.)

The author would not claim that he has given us an exhaustive essay on the supernaturalness of Christ in which all the aspects of the topic are thoroughly discussed. But what he set out to do, that is, to show that we can still believe in the supernaturalness of Christ, he has accomplished, and we are grateful for this faith-strengthening work.

W. ARNDT

**Treasury of David.** C.H. Spurgeon's Great Work of a Lifetime Condensed by David Otis Fuller, D.D. Zondervan Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 708 pages (2 volumes),  $6\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{3}{4}$ . Price, \$6.95.

The famous English preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon was not only a great preacher but also a great Bible student and, above all, a great Bible-teacher, who trained hundreds of Gospel-witnesses for mission and ministerial work at home and abroad. Those who study such books as his well-known *Treasury of David*, know why this simple and believing Christian man was an outstanding preacher: his preaching was deeply rooted in constant, profound, and intelligent study of God's Word. As Luther, whom he greatly admired, so also Spurgeon exceedingly loved and diligently used the book of Psalms as believing Israel's divine doctrinal and pastoral theology; and his famous *Treasury of David* consists of brief, pithy, striking notes on the various psalm verses, original and otherwise, always to the point, valuable to the homilist, and presented in clear, chaste, dignified English, which so well becomes the Church and the pulpit. Some one has said that they are the frank, honest notes of a frank, honest Christian. The two-volume edition here offered to all lovers of the Psalms is, of course, a decided abridgement of Spurgeon's original very large work; nevertheless, the two volumes contain over 4,000 separate quotations (over 1,700 by Spurgeon himself) by 720 different writers, most of them eminent Bible students. The work is therefore a valuable practical commentary on the Psalms, which, we are sure, pastors, teachers, and Bible students in general will be eager to possess. It may serve indeed as a fine Christmas or birthday gift for the busy but usually underpaid pastor or teacher. The mechanical equipment of this new *Treasury* is excellent; the binding is in blue cloth, with gilt lettering.

J. THEODORE MUELLER

**Evangelische Offenbarung.** Die Grundlagen der evangelischen Theologie. Von Otto Dilschneider. Verlag C. Bertelsmann, Gütersloh. 202 Seiten  $6\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$ . Preis: M. 1.50.

Die trefflichen Aussagen über Vernunft und Offenbarung, die sich in diesem Buch finden, haben wir in unserm MONTHLY schon mitgeteilt (Dezember 1940, S. 923). Es finden sich auch wertvolle Untersuchungen der Begriffe **שׁוּב**, μετανοειν, **יָרַע** (z. B.: „Aus dem assyrisch-babylonischen idu, das ‚außersehen‘ und ‚außerwählen‘ heißt, leitet sich etymologisch das hebräische **יָרַע** her“). Sonst ist mit unserm Buch nicht viel anzufangen. Einmal ist die Sprache furchtbar schwer verständlich. Über die messianischen Weissagungen z. B. wird so geredet: „In dessen ist dabei eines übersetzt worden, nämlich die Eigenart des alttestament-



lichen Offenbarungszeugnisses als genetisch-pragmatische Offenbarung und die Ablösung dieses so gearteten alttestamentlichen Offenbarungszeugnisses eben in diesen messianischen Weissagungen. In allen diesen Aussagen vollzieht sich nämlich die heilsgeschichtlich-prophetische Metamorphose vom pragmatischen Offenbarungszeugnis zum faktisch-personalen Offenbarungszeugnis des Neuen Testaments. Bei dem Schritt von der pragmatischen zur personal-faktischen Offenbarung des Neuen Testaments handelt es sich um ein eminent ethisches Problem, nämlich die Erfüllung des alttestamentlichen Ethos in der faktischen Heilswirklichkeit des Christus." (S. 119.) Der Schlusssatz des Buches lautet: „Die theologische Forschung hat sich stets dessen bewußt zu sein, daß sie unter den Sperrkreis dieses Zubeußtseins nur Sekundäres darzubieten hat, daß es also primär nicht um das *Cogito sum*, sondern um das *Cogitari fieri* geht.“ Sodann gibt unser Buch auf die wichtige Frage „Wo haben wir die Offenbarung?“ („Wenn wir heute das theologische Ringen der Gegenwart ansehen, so steht ja offenkundig die Offenbarungsfrage im Brennpunkt.“ S. 135) die verkehrte Antwort. Dies ist die Antwort: „Die *Summa theologiae* ist weiter nichts als das von Gott in unserm Leben gewirkte Christuszeugnis.“ (S. 138.) Etwas deutlicher — oder undeutlicher — ausgedrückt: „Der jetzt gegenwärtige pneumatistische Christus ist nicht die Ablösung des faktischen Christuszeugnisses des Neuen Testaments, sondern die gegenwärtige Verlebenbigung desselben im Lebenszeugnis der Gemeinde und des einzelnen.“ (S. 124.) Auf deutsch: Will man wissen, was Gott uns zu sagen hat, so frage man die Christen; durch ihre Christenerfahrung redet Christus zu uns. Allerdings redet unser Autor öfters so, als sei die Schrift die Quelle, die alleinige Quelle, der Heilserkenntnis. Wir teilen zwei dahinlautende Aussagen mit. „Das Buch, das wir die Heilige Schrift nennen und das uns in der Einheit von Altem und Neuem Testament das Zeugnis göttlicher Offenbarung“ (Sperrschrift von uns) „darbietet, ist die Quelle der theologischen Forschung.“ (S. 58.) „Die biblischen Zeugnisse“ (Sperrschrift von uns) „handeln ja von dem Christus und stellen uns seine Heilswirklichkeiten vor, genetisch-pragmatisch, faktisch und pneumatisch. Aber auch von allen diesen Darstellungen gilt das Pauluswort, daß wir einen Schatz in irdenen Gefäßen haben. Und dennoch ist und bleibt die Schrift die alleinige Quelle und Korrektur des Christuswissens und der theologischen Forschung. Ohne das Schriftzeugnis wäre alles Christuswissen und alle Theologie einer unkontrollierbaren Schwärmerei und Mystik preisgegeben.“ (S. 147.) Will Dilschneider hier sagen, daß die Heilige Schrift die alleinige Quelle der Theologie ist, so durfte er nicht sagen, daß „die *Summa theologiae* das in unserm Leben gewirkte Christuszeugnis ist“. Wie beide Aussagen zu harmonisieren sind, wissen wir nicht. Der Barthianer weiß es vielleicht. Möglicherweise liegt die Lösung darin, daß die Heilige Schrift als „Zeugnis göttlicher Offenbarung“ angesehen wird. Schließlich hilft aber auch das nichts. Denn wenn die Heilige Schrift alles Christuswissen, das in unserm Leben gewirkte Christuszeugnis, den jetzt gegenwärtigen pneumatistischen Christus kontrollieren soll, so muß sie mehr als bloßes „Zeugnis“ sein; sie muß alleinige Autorität haben. Wie die Sachen stehen, läuft der Satz, daß die *Summa theologia* das in unserm Leben gewirkte Christuszeugnis ist, auf unkontrollierbare Schwärmerei hinaus. Und die Schrift muß es sich gefallen lassen, von dem „pneumatischen Christus“ kontrolliert zu werden. Noch eins: Ist die Heilige Schrift mit Mängeln behaftet („irdene Gefäße“), so taugt sie nicht als Quelle und Korrektur des Christuswissens.

Eh. Engelder

**Philosophy, Education, and Certainty.** By Robert L. Cooke, Ed. D. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 392 pages, 5¾×7¾. Price, \$2.75.

This volume by a member of the faculty of Wheaton College is an attempt to combine the study of educational theory with an analysis of its philosophical background and of the bearings of metaphysics on the problem of certainty. The inclusion of "certainty" in the title of the volume raises expectations which are not fulfilled in these chapters, but as an introduction to the history of philosophy from the standpoint of Christian education the book meets a long-felt want. Especially the reading of the chapters on Philosophy Applied to Education, Science and Education, Evolutionism, Dewey, Democracy and the Schools, Progressivism, should prove of the greatest value to the educator who takes his task and profession seriously. There is ample documentation in the footnotes and in the chapter lists of readings, and the criticism throughout is from the standpoint of conservative Christian scholarship.

TH. GRAEBNER

**Does the Modern Papacy Require a New Evaluation?** By C. B. Gohdes, Litt. D. The Lutheran Literary Board, Burlington, Iowa. 1940. 263 pages. Price, \$2.25.

The author, professor of History at Capital University, states that this book is written "as a protest against the recent breach made in the time-honored relations that have obtained in the past between State and Church. The Church of Rome, through the action of our Chief Executive, has passed from the status of one Church among many to that claimed by it, a Church with special privilege." The reference is, of course, to the sending of Mr. Taylor as the personal representative of the President of the United States to the Vatican in Rome. The object of the book is to show, and to prove by official documents of the Roman Church, what these special privileges are; that the boast of Rome *Semper eadem* is still true; that therefore Rome is today as great a danger to, and an enemy of, Protestantism and of all free institutions in the world as ever. The sum of the author's argument is stated on the last page: "The Pope is not the herald and guardian of the Gospel, not the chief of the apostolate of Calvary, but their perverter. He is not the guardian of the peace of the nations but its disturber; and since he has come to stay, resistance to him by means of disclosing his character should be as enduring as himself."—It is necessary that, periodically, such books be issued; necessary, because actually the situation has not changed as far as the attitude of Rome towards Protestantism is concerned. But the people forget because no bloody action of the Inquisition is reported in the daily news; they think these things belong to the past; it cannot happen now, above all, it cannot happen here; because the Catholic Action is not publishing as part of its official program that the Government of the United States be made subservient to the Papacy, therefore that desire is entirely foreign to the men behind that action. So, despite the fact that most of what this book contains has been said before, it is good that it was put on the market, and it deserves recommendation.—A few alterations would, in the opinion

of this reviewer, improve the book. The author does not always manifest the calm objective outlook of the historian. In a matter which is, to quote Dr. W. H. Greever in the introduction, "delicate, beset with peculiar difficulties," it will answer the purpose better to abstain from impassioned exhibitions of personal feelings and convictions. Excursions like that on the Versailles Treaty serve no good purpose and may defeat the object of the book because they antagonize the reader. The rather superficial treatment and somewhat contemptuous condemnation of the Roman doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity strikes many other Christians as well and controverts the Lutheran Confessions. Moreover, the author's conception of the Roman view of Mary's immaculate conception is altogether incorrect. — A few other mistakes have crept into the text. Page 49, Pius XI should be Pius IX; page 69, "opposite" should be "apposite"; page 204, line 6, something is evidently omitted. The well-known historian of our Synod is not "Professor Dallman of St. Louis." — A topical index would add greatly to the value of the book; and while in general there is sufficient documentation, it is lacking in places where it is specially desirable, *e. g.*, regarding Franco and the Spanish war, p. 92 ff., the Catholic Action, p. 94 ff.

THEO. HOYER

**To Live Is Christ.** By Emil W. Matzner. The Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, O. 430 pages, 6×9. Price, \$2.50.

These sermons present a number of good features. They are textual; are homiletically well constructed; short but packed full of thought; have brief introductions that are not commonplace but arouse interest; use an abundance of good illustrations; speak a good, plain English. The preacher knows past history, but he speaks as a man who lives in the present world and who is aware of the needs of his hearers. Being a Lutheran, one expects that his doctrine is Biblical, and one is not disappointed. It may be debated whether at times he takes too much for granted as far as the way to salvation is concerned. In the interest of better preaching we recommend this book of sermons to our pastors.

J. H. C. FRITZ

**Two Minutes with God.** By Paul J. Hoh and Philip R. Hoh. Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn. 5¾×8¾. Price, \$1.50.

This devotional book, intended to meet the spiritual needs of young children, is exceptionally well planned and written from a pedagogical standpoint. We would enthusiastically recommend this book if it were free from objectionable matter. Not only is there too much moralizing, but there are false statements such as: "Without the Bible it is very, very hard to find God" (p. 20); "God loves them [bad people] and hopes that, because He loves them, they will change and become good" (p. 16). There is only passing reference to the vicarious atonement and the doctrine of justification. Children understand and believe the central doctrine of the Christian faith, and their life of sanctification is not effected by moralizing but is always a result of their faith in justification. Paul J. Hoh is professor at Mount Airy Theological Seminary of the United Lutheran Church.

F. E. MAYER

**The Polity of a Lutheran Congregation.** By A. Brunn. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 1940. Tract No. 133. 32 pages,  $3\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ . Price, 5 cts. the copy, postpaid; dozen, 48 cts., and postage.

This little tract sets forth the various definitions of the word "church," the relation and the duties of the pastor, the various officers, the voters, the societies toward their congregation. It deserves Synod-wide distribution, careful reading, and conscientious practicing of the principles outlined.

TH. LAETSCH

**Proceedings of the Twenty-Fourth Convention of the Texas District.** Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 1940. 75 pages,  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ . Price, 13 cts.

In his essay on "Unionism" Dr. Fritz, after defining unionism as "church union without unity of doctrine," points out that unionism is nothing new in the Church, that the arguments advanced in favor of unionism are specious, that unionism is contrary to Scripture and dangerous to the welfare of the Church, and he finally applies the Scriptural principle to a number of practical questions in reference to unionism. The report on the thirty-five missionary stations in the far-flung territory of the largest State of the Union, and particularly the report on the difficult and ofttime discouraging work in the Spanish mission among the Mexicans in Texas and in Mexico City, ought to be of general interest.

An overture by a pastoral conference to petition Synod at its convention in 1941 to grant a division of the present Texas District was lost by a vote of 113 to 38.

TH. LAETSCH

**Luther-Kalender für Südamerika. — O Lar Christao. — Ev.-Luth. Abreißkalender für das Jahr 1941 mit Andachten und Bibellectionen für jeden Tag.** Herausgegeben von der Ev.-Luth. Synode von Brasilien. Casa Publicadora Concordia, Porto Alegre, Brasilien.

Für solche, die mit ihnen bereits bekannt sind, kommen diese drei neuen Kalender wie alte, liebe Freunde. Der „Luther-Kalender“ erscheint bereits im 17. Jahrgang, sein portugiesischer Bruder *O Lar Christao* im 2. Beide enthalten reichen christlichen Lesestoff, der deutsche etwas mehr als der portugiesische. Beide aber weisen besonders die Laien auf solche synodale Angaben hin, die sie nötig haben, wie Adressen der Pastoren, Gemeinden und Predigtstationen, Synodalbeamte und anderes mehr. Im „Abreißkalender“ sind bis in den Oktober hinein die beiden Samuelisbücher Abschnitt für Abschnitt schön ausgelegt und zeitgemäß auf die heutigen Verhältnisse angewandt. Dies gibt dem Ganzen eine innerliche Einheit, die in hohem Maß segenspendend wirken wird. Wer diese drei Kalender bestellt, wird nicht nur Segen für sich ernten, sondern auch unsere Brüder in Südamerika in ihrer fleißigen und treuen Pionierarbeit ermuntern und unterstützen. Gottes Segen ruhe auch auf diesem Zeugnis der Wahrheit!

J. L. Müller

**The Seminary Edition of Choruses and Quartets, Classical and Modern, for Male Voices.** Edited by Walter Wismar. No. 19: "Christ Lay in Death's Dark Prison." Bach-Heyne. 26 pages,  $6\frac{3}{4} \times 10$ . Price, 75 cts.